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Near East and South Asia Review

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21 September 1990

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Near East and
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Articles

Iraq: Readyng the Terrorist Option **b3**

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Iraq appears to be prepared to launch terrorist attacks against Western and moderate Arab interests in the Middle East and Europe in the event of hostilities in the Persian Gulf. Iraqi officials have collected operational intelligence and have discussed terrorist plans with several Palestinian groups. **b3**

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Middle East-South Asia: Economic Impact of the Gulf Crisis **b3**

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The sharp increase in world oil prices as a result of Iraq's seizure of Kuwait will have a dramatic financial and economic impact on countries in the Middle East and South Asia. Sustained higher prices will weaken the resolve of many poorer countries in the region to adhere to UN sanctions against Iraq, and their political stability will be put at increased risk. **b3**

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Syrian Policy in Lebanon: Strategy and Prospects **b3**

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President Asad uses a mix of political and diplomatic tools, intelligence operations, and military coercion to pursue his strategic goals of restoring order to Lebanon and creating a government in Beirut sympathetic to his interests. In the near term Asad probably will rely on political means to influence events in Lebanon. **b3**

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Pakistan's Religious Diversity: Stumblingblock to a National Identity

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In the years since independence Islamabad has reinforced Pakistan's religious diversity through legal, political, and economic discrimination rather than seeking to foster a national identity. Religious tensions between the Islamic sects and religious minorities have been heightened as the government has striven to develop a fully Islamic state

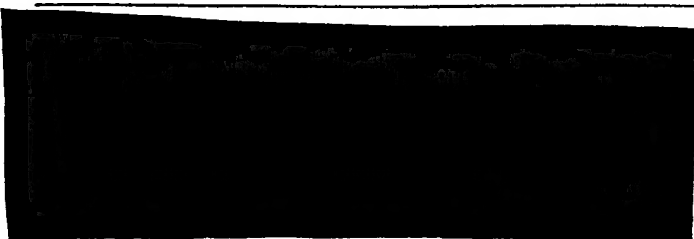
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Near East and
South Asia Review [redacted] b3

Articles

Iraq: Ready the Terrorist
Option [redacted] b3

Iraq appears to be prepared to launch terrorist attacks against Western and moderate Arab interests in the Middle East and Europe in the event of hostilities in the Persian Gulf. [redacted]

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Meanwhile, Western and moderate Arab facilities and personnel worldwide have received numerous threats of retaliation for the deployment of US forces to Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf. [redacted]

Iraq's actions and the intervention of US forces have prompted hardline Palestinian groups to rally to Saddam, lending additional impetus for freelance terrorist attacks by these groups. Radical fervor among Palestinian groups is likely to outlast the current crisis. Even if Saddam is defeated, many Palestinians will view him as the only Arab leader willing to stand up to the United States and Israel in defense of Arab interests. [redacted] b3

Saddam's allegations that the introduction of US military forces into the Middle East has defiled Muhammad's birthplace could give rise to potential self-motivated terrorists. Radical Palestinian and Islamic fundamentalist leaders are calling for Arabs to attack Western and moderate Arab targets. [redacted] b1, b3

b1, b3

Where and How?

Western and moderate Arab targets in Western Europe and the Middle East are probably at greatest risk. Iraqi and Palestinian resources in these areas are well developed, and targets are plentiful. [redacted] b1, b3

The Danger From Freelancers

In addition to actions directly encouraged by Baghdad, Palestinian and Islamic fundamentalist groups have made their own preparations to attack Western and moderate Arab targets. Most groups have linked implementation of their terrorist plans to an outbreak of hostilities between Iraq and Western forces in the Gulf. [redacted] b3

US forces in Saudi Arabia pose a particularly attractive target [redacted] b1, b3

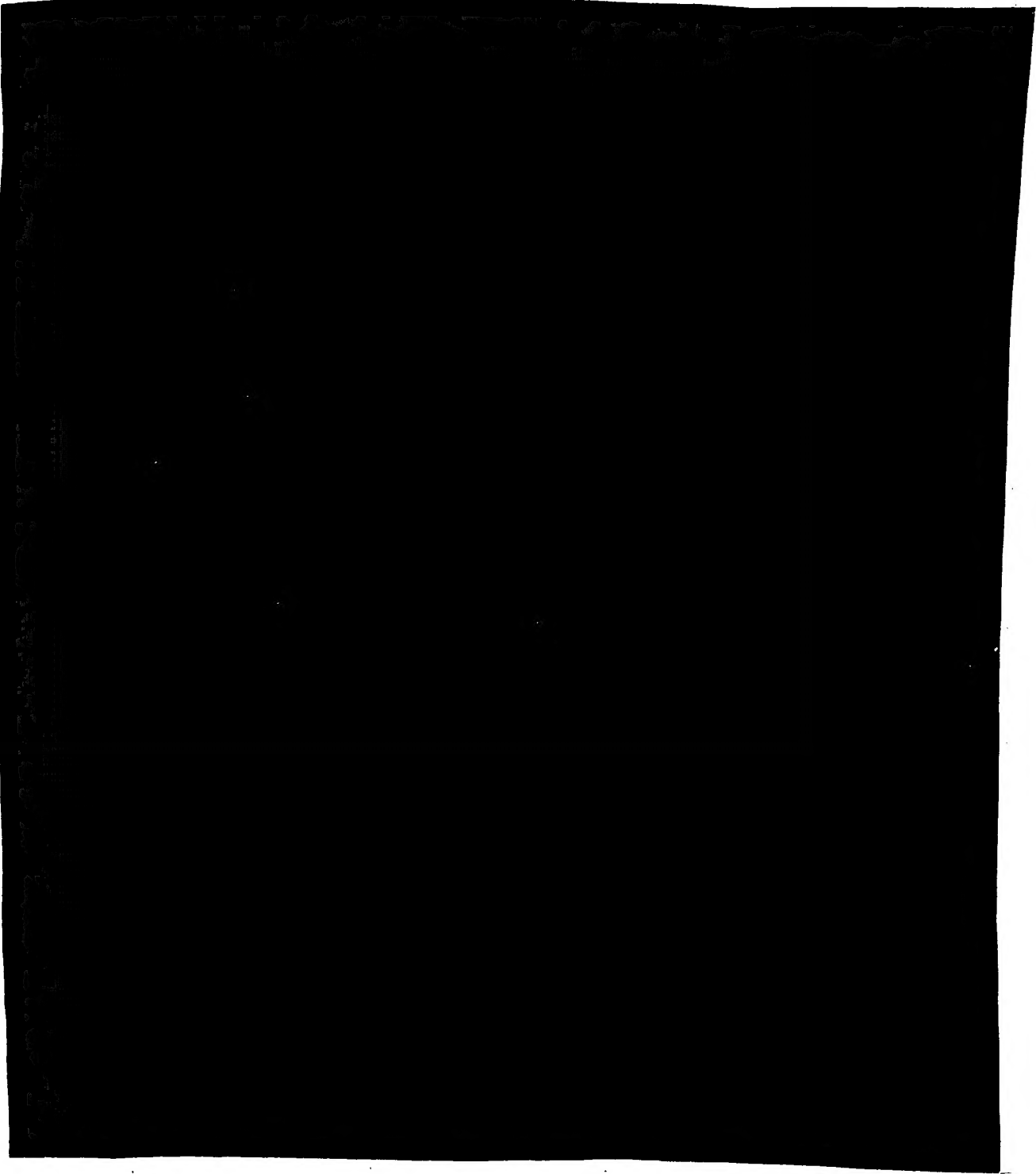
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Iraq has a worldwide network that could be used to facilitate a terrorist attack. Baghdad has used civilian and military intelligence officers, diplomatic facilities, Iraqi Airways offices, and Iraqi cultural centers to support numerous terrorist operations—mostly against Iranian, Syrian, and dissident targets. [REDACTED] b1 b3

Numerous means are available for potential attacks. Radical Palestinian groups supported by Iraq have demonstrated a wide array of capabilities in Europe and the Middle East and have a history of carrying out assassinations, airline hijackings, airport attacks, bombings, seaborne operations, and cross-border infiltrations. [REDACTED] b3

Outlook

A military confrontation in the Gulf would almost certainly trigger an outbreak of terrorism against the United States and its allies. In the event of a limited US military action perceived as provocative by Iraq—the disabling of an oil tanker, for example—Saddam would be more likely to respond with terrorism than with conventional military means, which he would fear could

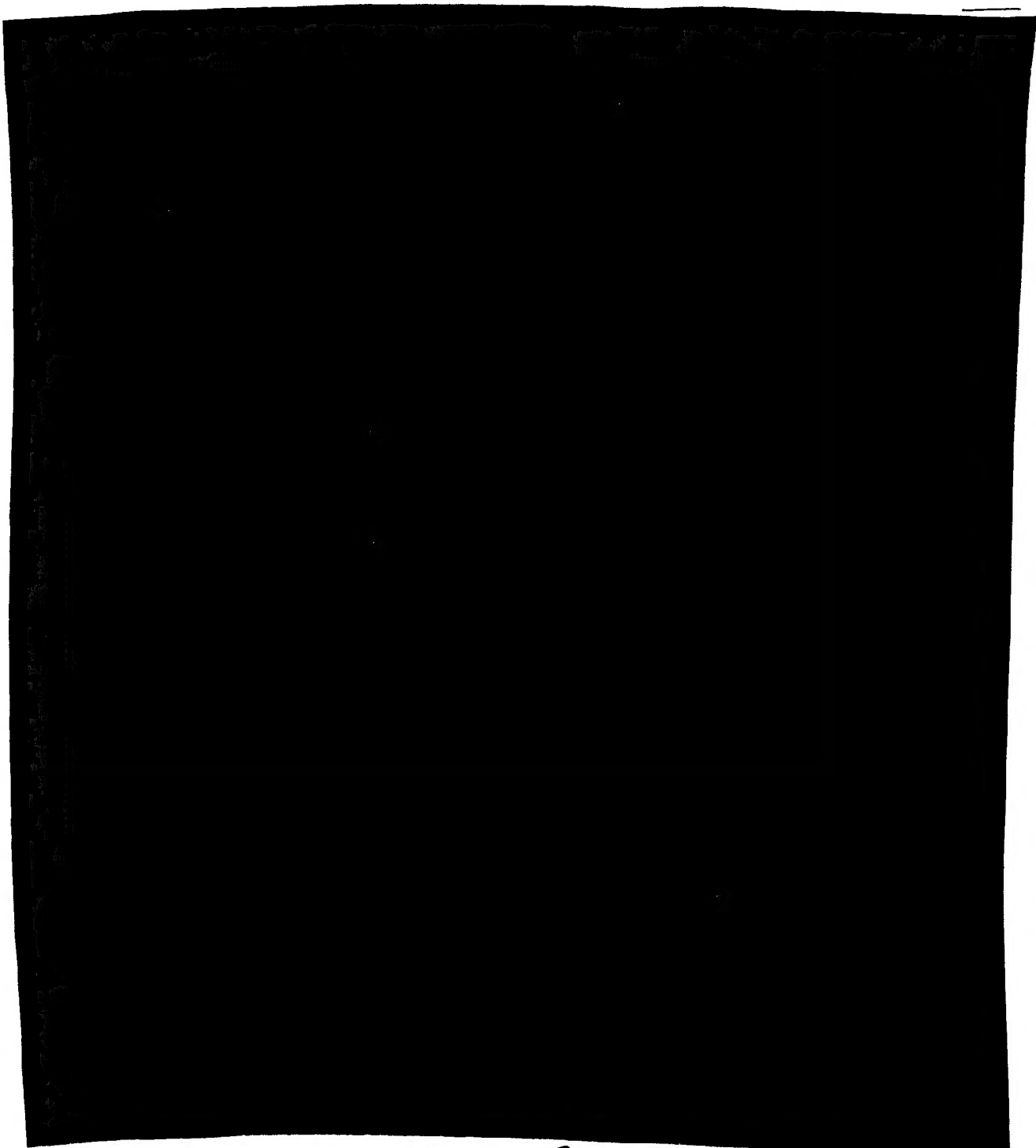
drag him into a larger war he probably wants to avoid. In either case Saddam is likely to use all means at his disposal to wreak havoc on the United States, and his client groups would be eager to act. [REDACTED] b3

In the absence of a shooting war, Saddam is likely to keep the terrorist option in reserve while international diplomatic initiatives are under way. He probably calculates that terrorist attacks at this point would only strengthen international sentiment against him and could be used by the United States and its allies to initiate military hostilities. [REDACTED] b3

An attack against a Western target probably is inevitable whether Iraq authorizes one or not. Several terrorist groups are poised to attack Western and moderate Arab interests to protest the presence of Western forces in the region and the support provided by moderate Arab states. Radical Palestinian groups may conduct attacks at any time. Terrorist groups not sponsored by Iraq, such as the PFLP-GC and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, also may exploit anti-US sentiment to attack US interests. In addition, Westerners will be vulnerable to sporadic violence by Iraqi sympathizers throughout the Middle East. [REDACTED] b3

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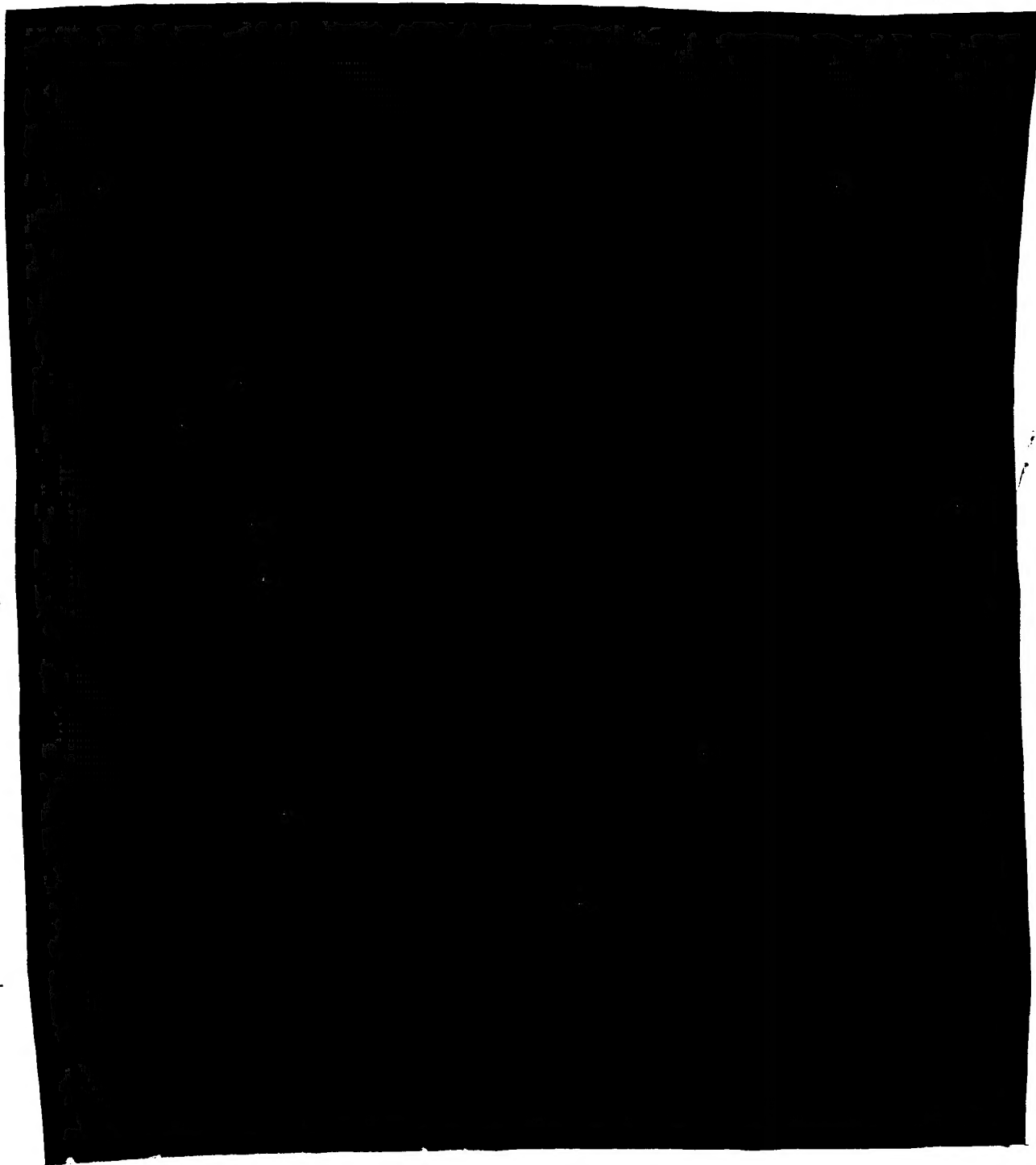
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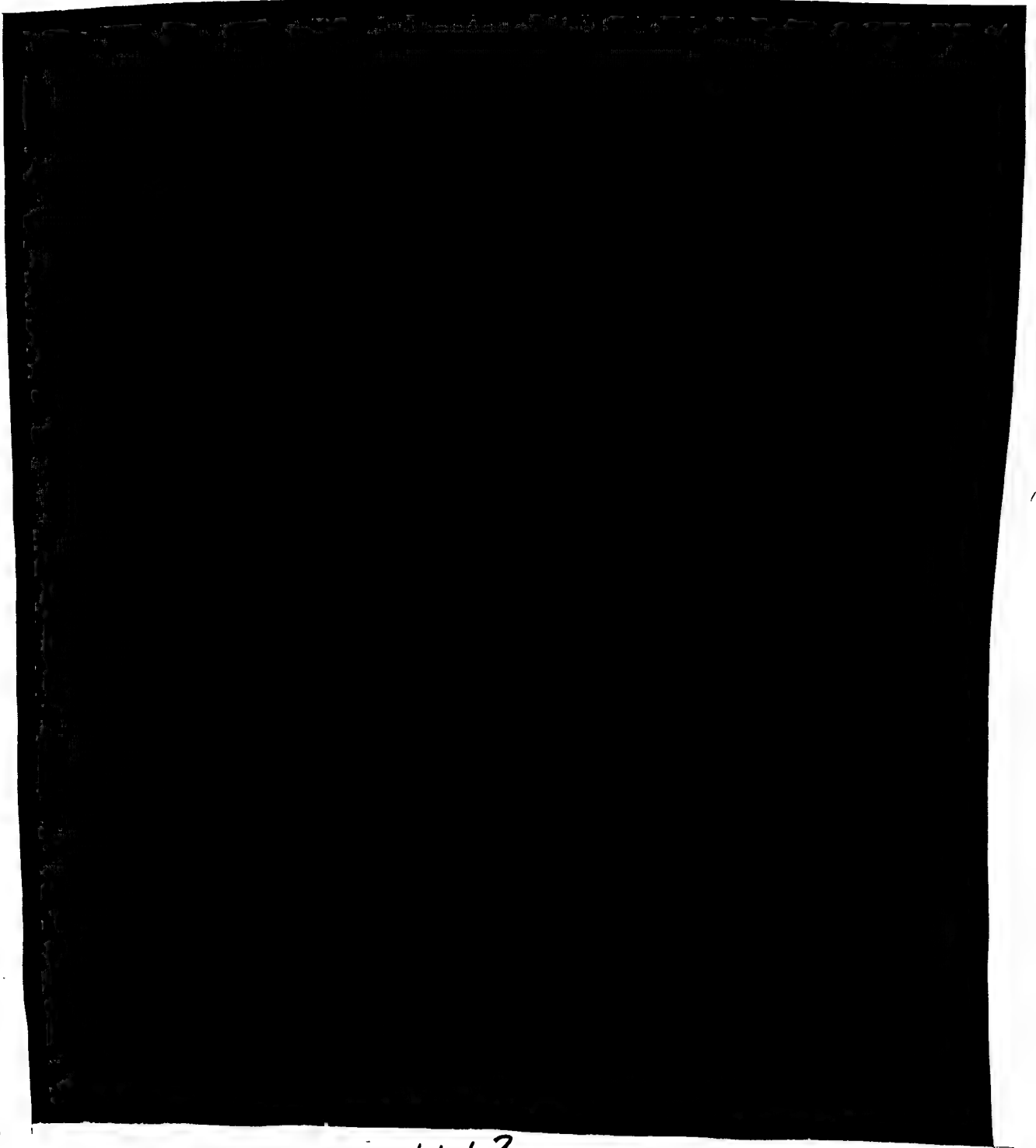
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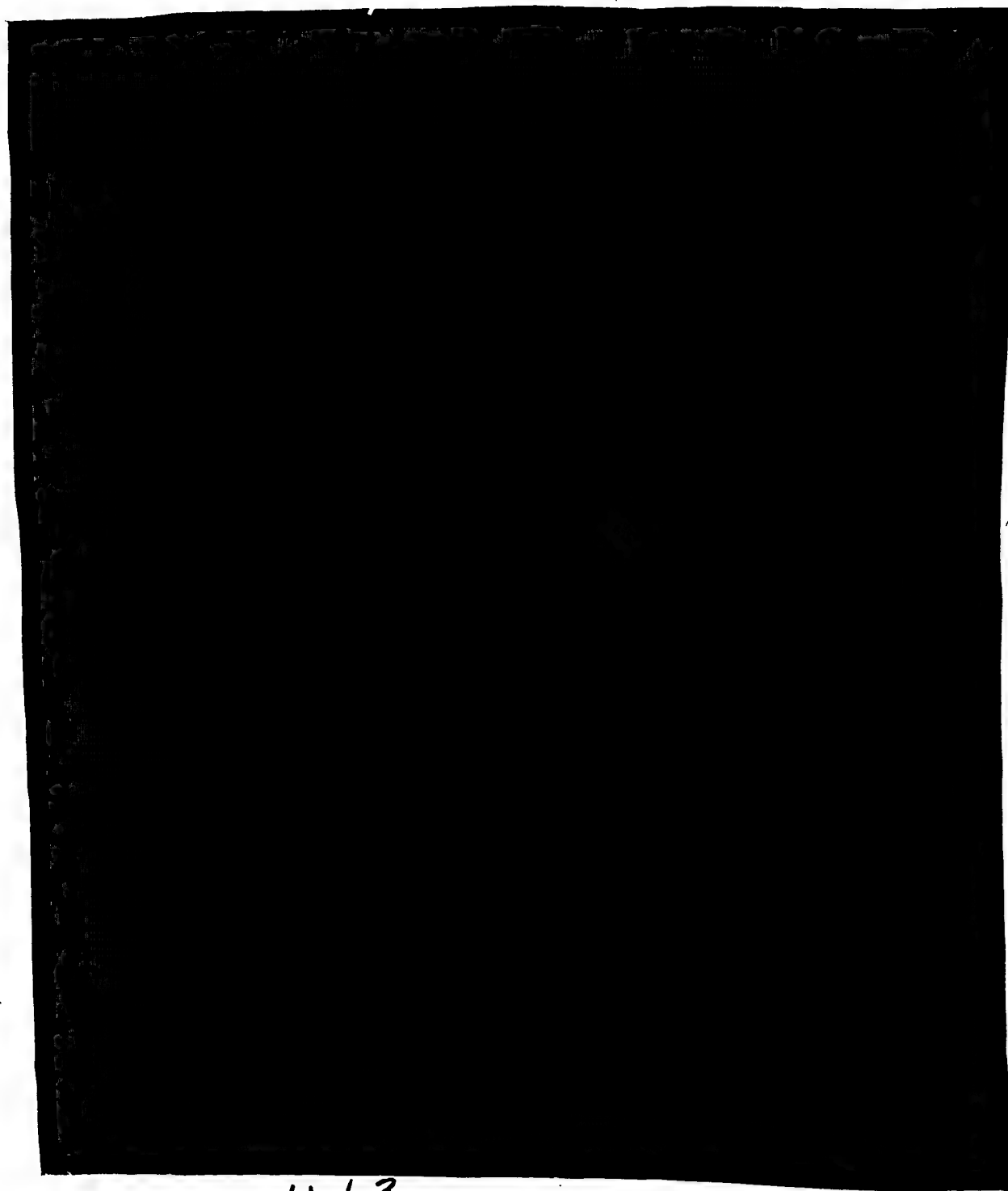
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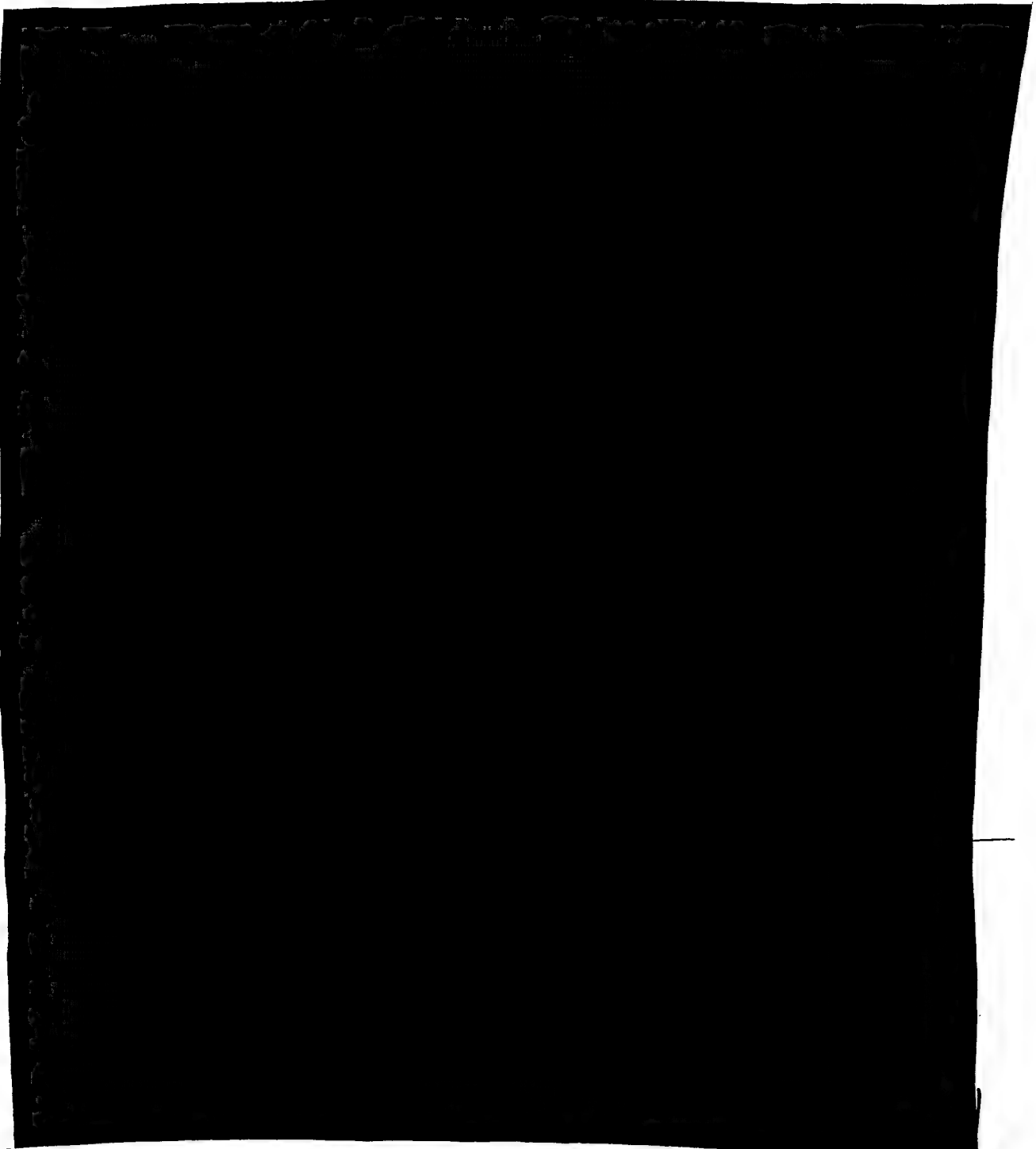
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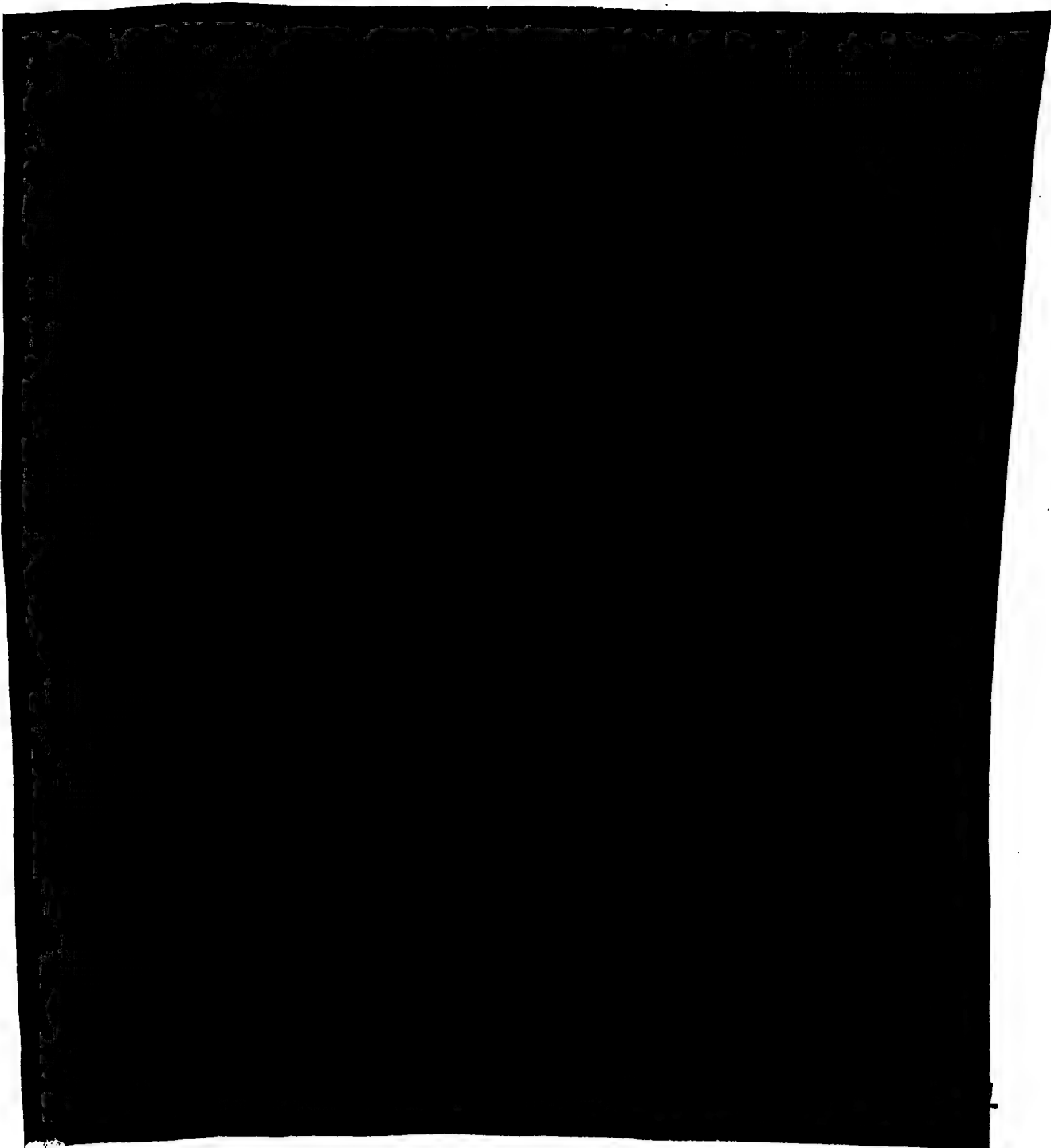
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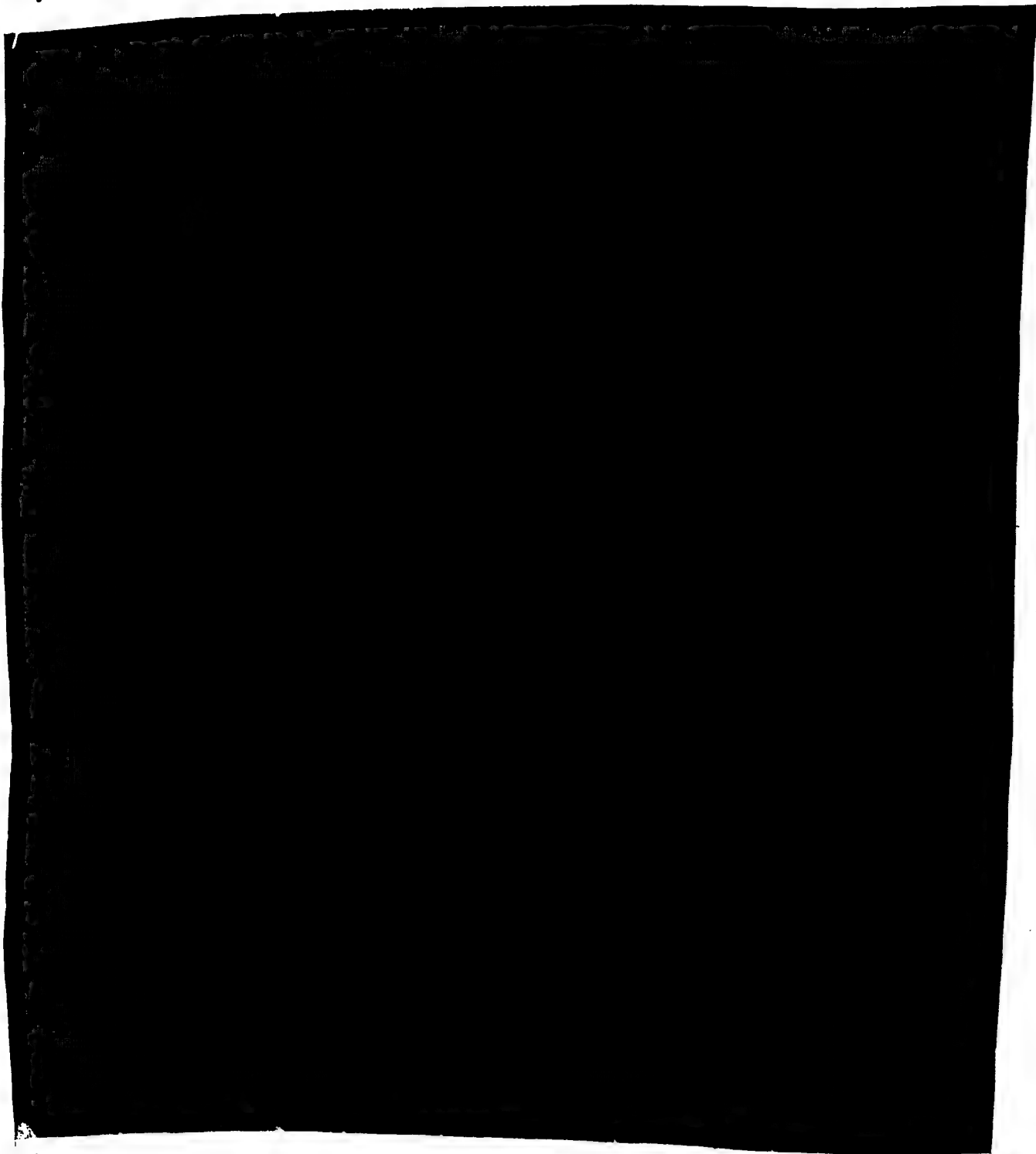
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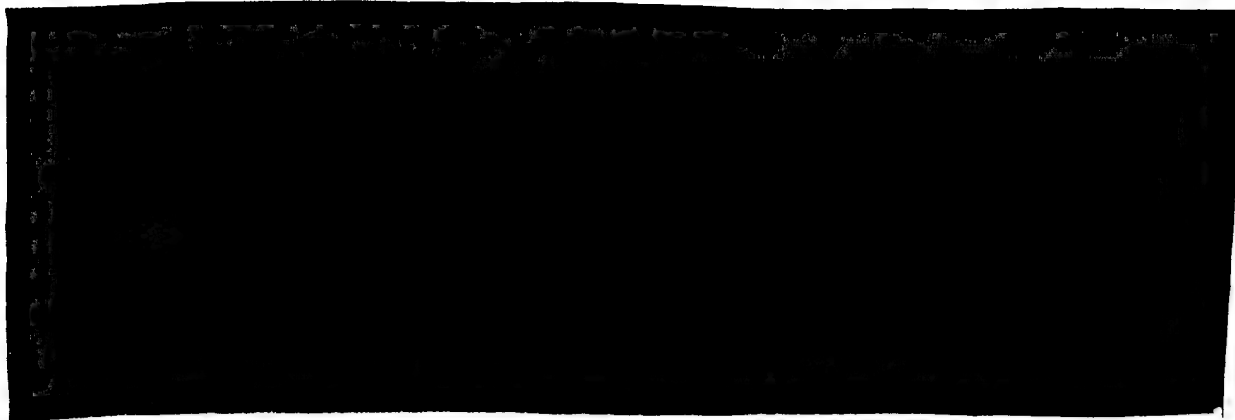
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Middle East-South Asia: Economic Impact of the Gulf Crisis b3

b-1 The sharp increase in world oil prices as a result of Iraq's seizure of Kuwait will have a dramatic financial and economic impact on countries in the Middle East and South Asia. If price increases are sustained, oil exporters such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, and Iran will reap a considerable windfall. Oil-importing countries—the poorer Arab states and the Indian subcontinent—will sustain a heavy financial blow from higher oil prices. Several countries—both exporters and importers—will experience a sharp falloff of remittance income from Kuwait and Iraq. b3

Unless significant financial assistance is forthcoming, poorer countries in the region will have to reduce oil imports, hindering economic growth. Sustained higher prices will weaken the resolve of many of these states to adhere to UN sanctions against Iraq. b3

The political stability of several countries in the region—Jordan, in particular—will be put at increased risk as inflation and unemployment rise. A sharp economic downturn could unseat the shaky coalition government in India. b3

Winners and Losers Among Oil Exporters

We estimate Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Algeria would receive additional annual revenue ranging from \$850 million for Syria to \$16 billion for Saudi Arabia if oil prices stabilize in the \$30 per barrel range:

- In Saudi Arabia additional revenues will help fund increased defense spending, meet some of the expenditures of the Gulf multinational force, aid those governments supporting Saudi Arabia, cover rising refugee costs, and strengthen foreign exchange reserves.
- Moreover, proposed production increases could increase projected annual earnings by an estimated \$18-22 billion in Saudi Arabia, and \$4-6 billion in the United Arab Emirates. b3
- Revenue gains will provide a strong boost to financially weak Syria and Algeria, enabling both countries to retire debt and build up reserves.

- In Iran the windfall will help speed up reconstruction efforts. b3

At the same time, the Gulf crisis has disrupted financial markets in the region, shattered business confidence, and provoked capital flight. b1, b3

banks in the Gulf have had to deplete their reserves and sell assets to meet the demands of depositors for foreign currency. If the crisis escalates, Gulf financial systems will face paralysis. b1, b3

business confidence in the region, which had begun to show signs of recovery after the Iran-Iraq war, has plummeted, with new investment and construction at a standstill. b3

Sanctions will deny cash-strapped Iraq much of the economic benefits accruing to other producers in the region. Its oil exports are now estimated at less than 100,000 barrels per day (b/d), a 96-percent reduction from preinvasion levels. If oil prices settle in the \$30 per barrel range, we estimate sanctions will cost Baghdad \$24 billion a year in lost revenues. b3

Egypt and Yemen, although oil exporters, are likely to be worse off financially as a result of the Gulf crisis. Oil prices around \$30 per barrel would provide Egypt \$700 million and Yemen \$530 million annually in additional oil revenues. Egypt's oil gains, however, will probably not offset the drop in remittances from Kuwait and Iraq—an estimated \$1 billion—and, perhaps, a sizable reduction in the \$3 billion Cairo earned from Suez Canal traffic revenues and tourism. Expatriate workers' remittances are Yemen's main source of foreign exchange. A rapid return home of expatriate workers from the Gulf would aggravate already high levels of unemployment in both countries. b3

A Severe Economic Blow to Oil Importers

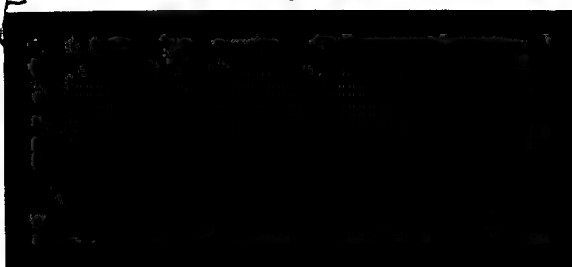
Higher prices and the cutoff in supplies from Iraq and Kuwait will hit such oil importers as Morocco, India, Pakistan, and Jordan especially hard. Morocco and India imported 60 and 40 percent, respectively, of their oil and petroleum needs from Iraq and Kuwait. Pakistan imported over 60 percent of its petroleum products from

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Kuwait. Jordan still receives over 90 percent of its oil from Iraq. These countries will probably exhaust their limited foreign exchange reserves if they attempt to make up crude oil and product losses through spot market purchases. ~~61~~ b3



Strapped for foreign exchange and with few opportunities to increase exports in the short run, most oil importers probably will reduce energy imports, hindering economic growth. In the first oil shock in 1973-75, India cut the volume of its petroleum imports 7 percent, and during the 1979-82 runup in oil prices

Cutbacks in petroleum imports and consumption will probably lead to reduced agricultural and industrial production, while higher average oil prices—currently about 75 percent above last year's levels—will continue to fuel inflation. ~~61~~ b3

The Gulf crisis will hurt those oil importers—India, Jordan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sudan—that rely on worker remittances to bolster their foreign exchange earnings. We estimate India stands to lose over \$700 million and Jordan up to \$400 million annually in Kuwaiti remittances alone. Bangladesh and Pakistan expect to lose \$275 million and \$150 million, respectively, in remittance earnings, according to Embassy reporting. Sudan's fragile economy depends on over \$200 million in annual remittance income. A sharp cut would further deepen Khartoum's current financial crisis. Palestinians in the West Bank expect to lose \$150 million annually in remittances from Kuwait. ~~61~~ b3

Implications

Many nations in the Middle East and South Asia—Israel, Egypt, Pakistan, Jordan, Morocco, Sudan, and Bangladesh—will press for increased financial support from Washington, other industrial countries, and

Middle East-South Asia: Additional Annual Revenues and Expenditures Resulting From Oil Price Increases^a

Million US\$

Exporters	Price per barrel		Current Estimated Foreign Exchange Reserves
	\$30	\$40	
Additional revenue			
Saudi Arabia	16,150	35,000	10,545
United Arab Emirates	4,500	10,400	4,533
Iran	7,600	16,000	4,000
Algeria	3,350	8,100	721
Syria	850	1,200	50
Egypt	700	1,725	1,382
Yemen	530	1,300	180
Revenue loss			
Iraq	24,100	32,100	3,000
Kuwait	5,100	10,800	
Importers			
Additional expenditures			
Jordan	220	520	370
Morocco	300	730	335
Pakistan	525	-650	500
India	1,970	4,770	2,800

^a Estimates are illustrative of oil price increases above the OPEC \$21 per barrel benchmark price.

international financial institutions to cushion the impact of higher oil prices and sanctions. ~~61~~ b3

Egypt has received pledges of large-scale financial support from Japan and the Arab Gulf states. Morocco, Pakistan, and Bangladesh will press for more aid from the Gulf states, while Jordan and Sudan are likely to face cuts in assistance because of their pro-Iraqi stance. These countries are likely to request the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to temporarily relax loan conditions and ease repayment terms. We expect New Delhi to expand its commercial borrowing and seek short-term IMF support to cover oil imports. ~~61~~ b3

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India, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Yemen are likely to press the United Nations to compensate or exempt them from the full range of economic sanctions against Iraq. These countries will use Jordan's receipt of UN support for compensation under Article 50 as precedent for similar claims.¹ If they cannot gain exemptions or pledges of compensation, these nations' commitment to UN economic sanctions is likely to weaken. [REDACTED] b3

If large-scale hostilities ensue and prices jump to over \$40 a barrel, those oil exporters away from the potential Gulf war zone—Egypt, Algeria, and Yemen—are likely to reap significant gains. In the Gulf there would be a high risk for damage to oil facilities and economic chaos. Priced out of the oil market, poorer regional importers, such as India, Pakistan, and Morocco, would

have to significantly slash oil imports and consumption. [REDACTED] b3

If the crisis drags on and oil prices remain high, inflation and slower growth will threaten the economic and political stability of several Arab countries in the region. Jordan's fragile political system will be strained by the additional pressures of high inflation, increased unemployment, and the financial burden of sanctions. Rising unemployment and inflation also will increase domestic opposition to Cairo's participation in the multinational force. Elsewhere, India's shaky political coalition government is highly vulnerable to opposition attacks over rising prices and employment issues. [REDACTED] b3

¹ Article 50 in the UN Charter enables a member country to seek a "solution" to economic hardship caused by implementing sanctions. A "solution" can be either exemption from certain sanction obligations or compensation for economic losses suffered if sanctions are implemented. [REDACTED] b3

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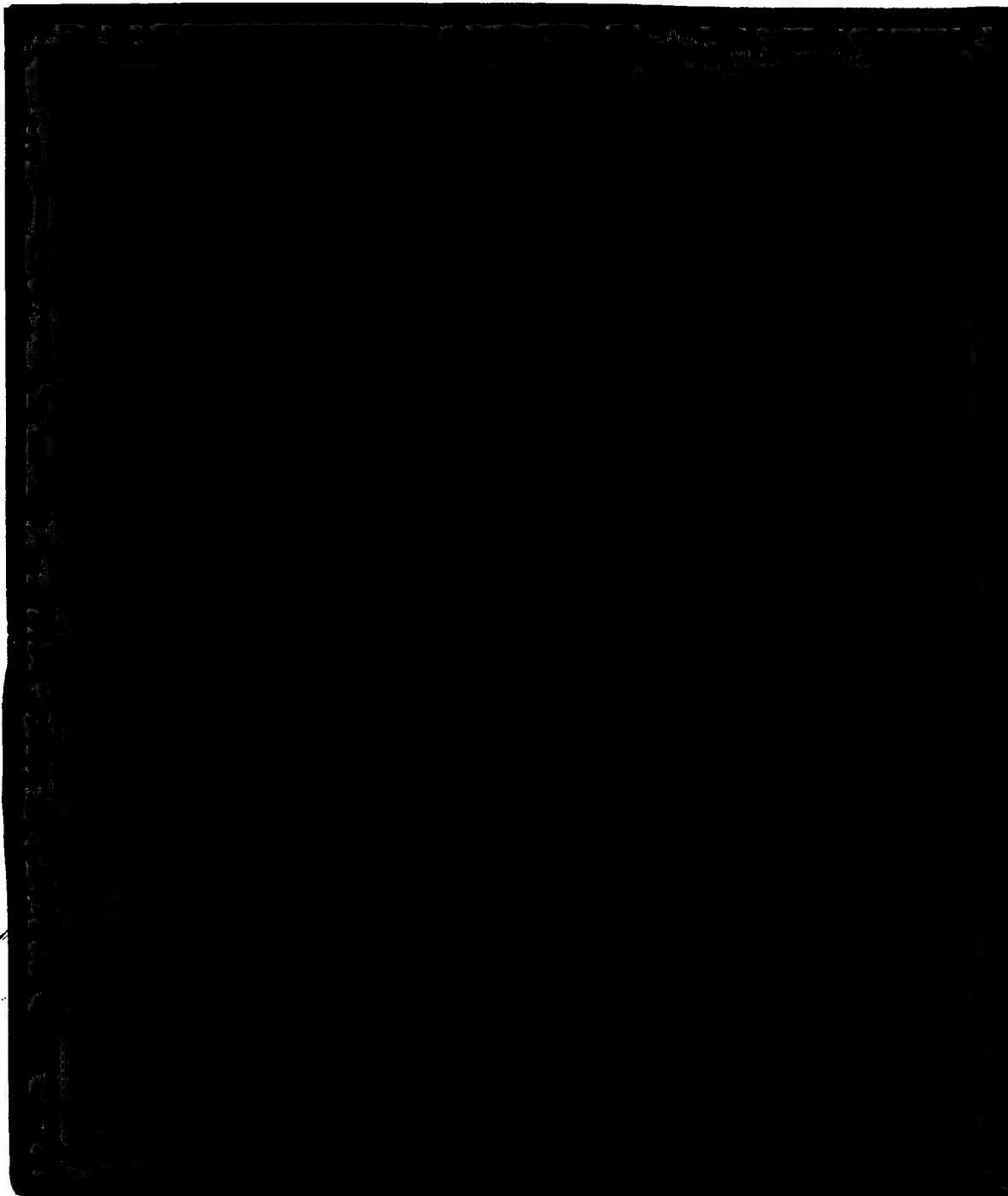
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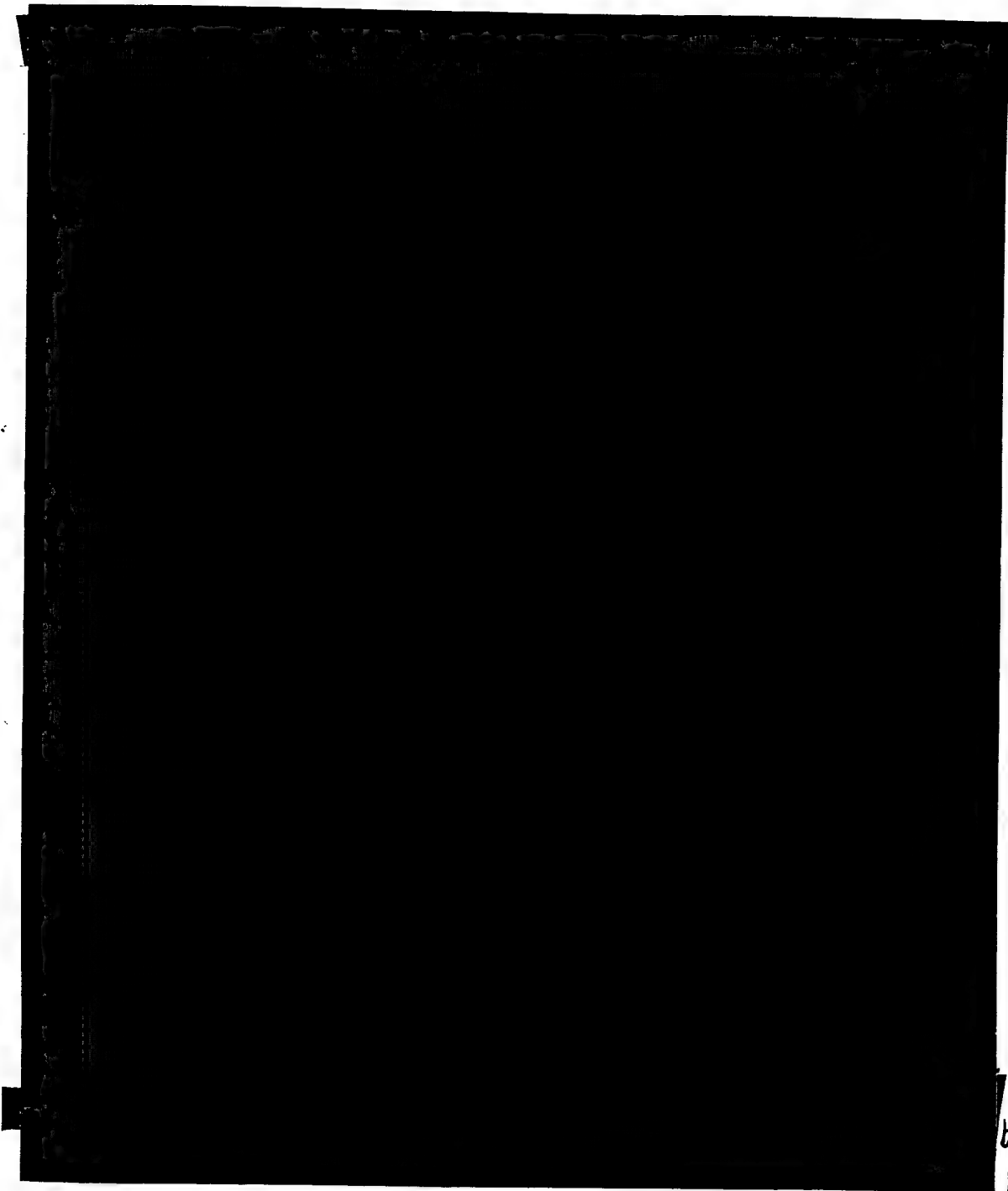
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Syrian Policy in Lebanon: Strategy and Prospects

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Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad uses a mix of political and diplomatic tools, intelligence operations, and military coercion to pursue his strategic goals of restoring order to Lebanon and creating a government in Beirut sympathetic to his interests. In the near term Asad probably will rely on political means to influence events in Lebanon because developments there during the past year have been favorable for Damascus. Combat operations or clandestine activities against Lebanon's sects are unlikely in the short term unless Syria's political position in Lebanon deteriorates. Over the longer term we doubt that any mix of foreign policy tools will enable Asad to achieve his strategic objectives in Lebanon. 63

The Ways and Means of Syrian Policy

Asad's strategy in Lebanon has not changed significantly since he first sent Syrian troops there in 1976. He tries to maintain equilibrium among the various Lebanese sects, preventing any one of them from obtaining a dominant political or military position. To this end, he plays the Lebanese against each other and shifts alliances as necessary. We believe Asad calculates that a balance of power among several weak and competing groups stands the best chance of forcing all of them to reconcile and to join a national political front amenable to Syria's bidding. 63

Political Legerdemain. In pursuit of his goals in Lebanon, Asad's current policy is to support the government of President Harawi and the Accord for National Reconciliation adopted by Lebanese legislators in At Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, last October. The Syrians favor the accord because it is endorsed by the Arab League and backs Syria's continued military presence in Lebanon. It outlines constitutional and other reforms long advocated by Damascus, including the disarming of Lebanon's militias, creation of a new army, continuation of a secular government, and maintenance of a Christian-Muslim balance pending additional reforms that would end sectarianism in the political system and the Army. 63

Syria's Obligations Under the At Ta'if Accord

"...Syrian troops will graciously assist legitimate Lebanese forces to extend the authority of the Lebanese state within a limited period of time not exceeding two years after the ratification of the national accord document, the election of the president of the republic, the formation of a national accord government, and the confirmation of political reforms in the Constitution."

"At the end of this period, the Syrian Government and the Lebanese Government...will decide on the redeployment of Syrian troops in the Bekaa region and the entry to the western Bekaa at Dahr al-Baydar to the line Al Mudayrij-'Ayn Darah, or if need be at other points to be determined by a joint Lebanese-Syrian military committee. The two governments will also agree to determine the number of Syrian troops to be deployed in the aforementioned areas and to define the nature of the relationship between these troops and the authorities of the Lebanese state in the areas where they will be deployed." 63

Except for rhetorical support and limited efforts by Syrian troops to maintain order in Muslim West Beirut, Damascus has done little to bolster Harawi. The Syrians have not offered economic or military assistance, and they continue to meddle politically. Syria's ambivalence, in our view, underscores its perception of Harawi's weak political standing and the growing strains within the Christian and Shia communities, the two largest confessional groups in Lebanon. Both communities are reluctant to fully back the At Ta'if accord and Harawi's government in part because of lingering suspicions that Harawi is a Syrian puppet. 63

Of the two leading Christian militias, Samir Jaja's Lebanese Forces gives only tepid support to the At Ta'if agreement, while renegade General Michel Awn and his Lebanese Front openly oppose it. Both groups fought each other to a bloody standoff over supremacy of the Christian enclave between January and May. The Shia Amal militia reluctantly supports the At Ta'if accord and Hizballah is opposed, but they have expended most

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of their energy this year battling each other for control over Lebanon's Shias and South Lebanon.

Diplomatic Rigmerole. Just as Asad endeavors to influence the internal politics of Lebanon, he attempts to control the involvement of foreign governments and organizations there. Asad does not intend to yield Syria's dominant political position in Lebanon to any state or institution. For example, Asad resisted efforts last year by the Arab League Tripartite Committee on Lebanon to reach a political settlement, suspecting that the committee would push a solution amenable to Awn and Iraq. Damascus's stance earned it an unusual public rebuke from the Arab League. Afterwards Asad displayed a more conciliatory attitude toward the league's mediation efforts, all the while steering the organization toward a solution more in line with Syria's interests. Earlier this year Asad maneuvered to subvert Vatican and French initiatives to break the political stalemate in Lebanon because he concluded they would have bolstered Awn and Jaja.

In contrast to past attempts to stop Shia infighting, Damascus is maintaining a low profile toward the Amal-Hizballah dispute.

Syrian media have given little attention to the battles, and Damascus has not called for a cease-fire. Syria's options are limited. Its troops are not deployed in the south because of the high risk that such a move would provoke Israel to increase its presence in South Lebanon. Intervention, moreover, would risk further strains in Syria's troubled relations with Iran, which backs Hizballah in its fight with the pro-Syrian Amal.

Hizballah has refused entreaties from Damascus to stop the fighting and to join with Amal in supporting the Lebanese reform program. Damascus blames Hizballah's intransigence on the influence of Iranian radicals over segments of the organization.

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The Gloved Fist. Asad has used military force in Lebanon during the past 15 years, but he has yet to deal a crushing blow to any Lebanese group. The Syrian Army has been used primarily to intervene in outbreaks of intercommunal violence, to prevent bids by one group to dominate the others, and to respond to foreign interventions—diplomatic or military—which threaten Syrian interests. [REDACTED] b3

Last year's artillery clashes between Syrian troops and Awn's forces illustrated Asad's selective use of military force in Lebanon. Awn openly defied Syria, declared a "war of liberation" against Damascus, and tried to impose a blockade against the Syrian-backed Muslim government in Beirut. Both Awn and Jaja—an ally in the fight against Syria at the time—solicited aid from Iraq, which tried to ship weapons to the Christian warlords and publicly sided with them against Damascus. In response, Asad imposed a land blockade against the Christian enclave in cooperation with elements of the Lebanese Army and the Druze and Amal militias allied with Damascus and returned Awn's artillery fire. Damascus eventually introduced a naval blockade and helicopter operations off the Lebanese coast to interdict weapons shipments from Iraq, stepped up its aerial reconnaissance of the enclave, supplied tanks to the Druze and Amal, and sponsored what proved to be an unsuccessful ground attack by its Lebanese allies against Awn's units in Beirut in August 1989. [REDACTED] b3

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Following the assassination last November of President Muawad, the first Lebanese President elected after conclusion of the At Ta'if accord, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Asad withdrew a limited number of troops from Lebanon as part of the Syrian contingent deployed to Saudi Arabia following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, but he will probably maintain a strong military presence around the Christian enclave as long as Awn continues to oppose the legitimate Lebanese Government. He will also support strengthening the capabilities of the reorganized Lebanese Army. Nevertheless, we believe Asad prefers a political solution to the Awn problem.

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[REDACTED]


A full-scale assault on the Christian enclave entails considerable risks. It would unite the fractious Christian community and prompt it to turn to Israel, Iraq, or a Western state for aid. It would also result in high Syrian casualties, given the mountainous terrain of the Christian enclave and the determination of Christians to protect their homeland. [REDACTED] b3


Outlook for Damascus


In our view, Asad's strategy in Lebanon will not enable him to dominate Lebanon completely during the next one or two years. Political divisions in Lebanon remain wide, in part because of Syria's policies, and the prospects for intercommunal reconciliation are remote. None of Damascus's levers—political maneuvering, military muscle-flexing, or intrigue—are adequate for the task even if they are more forcefully applied. Asad has the capacity to remove Awn, to compel squabbling Muslims to cooperate, and to limit bloodshed and help promote a modicum of unity. But the threat of Syrian


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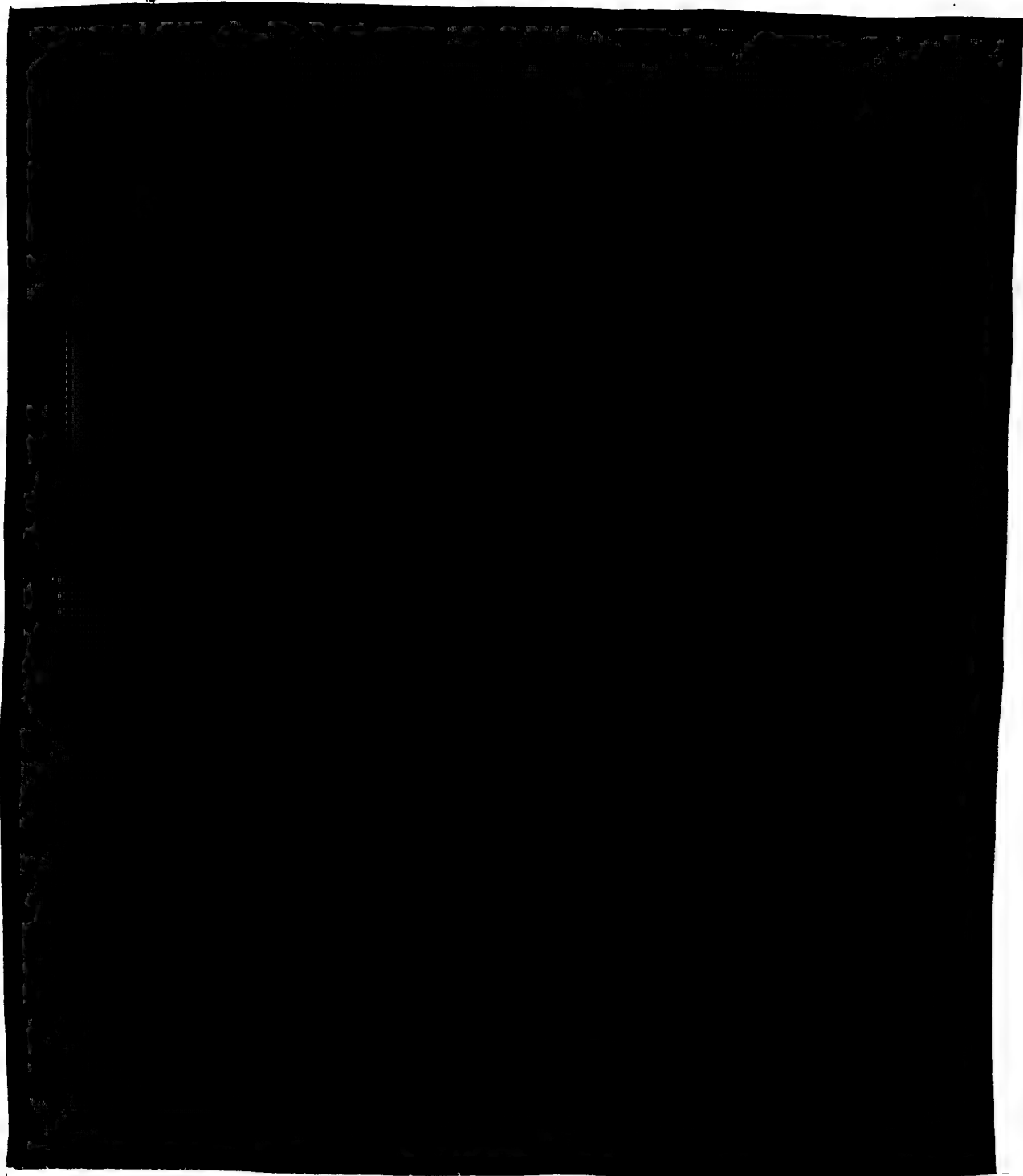
force has not been enough to make the sects compromise with each other, and over the longer term Syrian tactics risk strengthening anti-Syrian attitudes in Lebanon. The resulting stalemate ensures the likelihood of renewed international criticism of Syria and its role in Lebanon.  b3

Despite the dismal prospects for achieving its overall goals, there is a good chance the Syrians can attain more limited objectives. 

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At the same time, we believe Asad will not dramatically increase the stakes in Lebanon or take significantly greater risks. Caution generally has served Asad well in Lebanon, and he has little reason to intervene more forcefully militarily or politically as long as foreign states are reluctant to challenge Syria's role in Lebanon and the Harawi government retains international recognition.  b3

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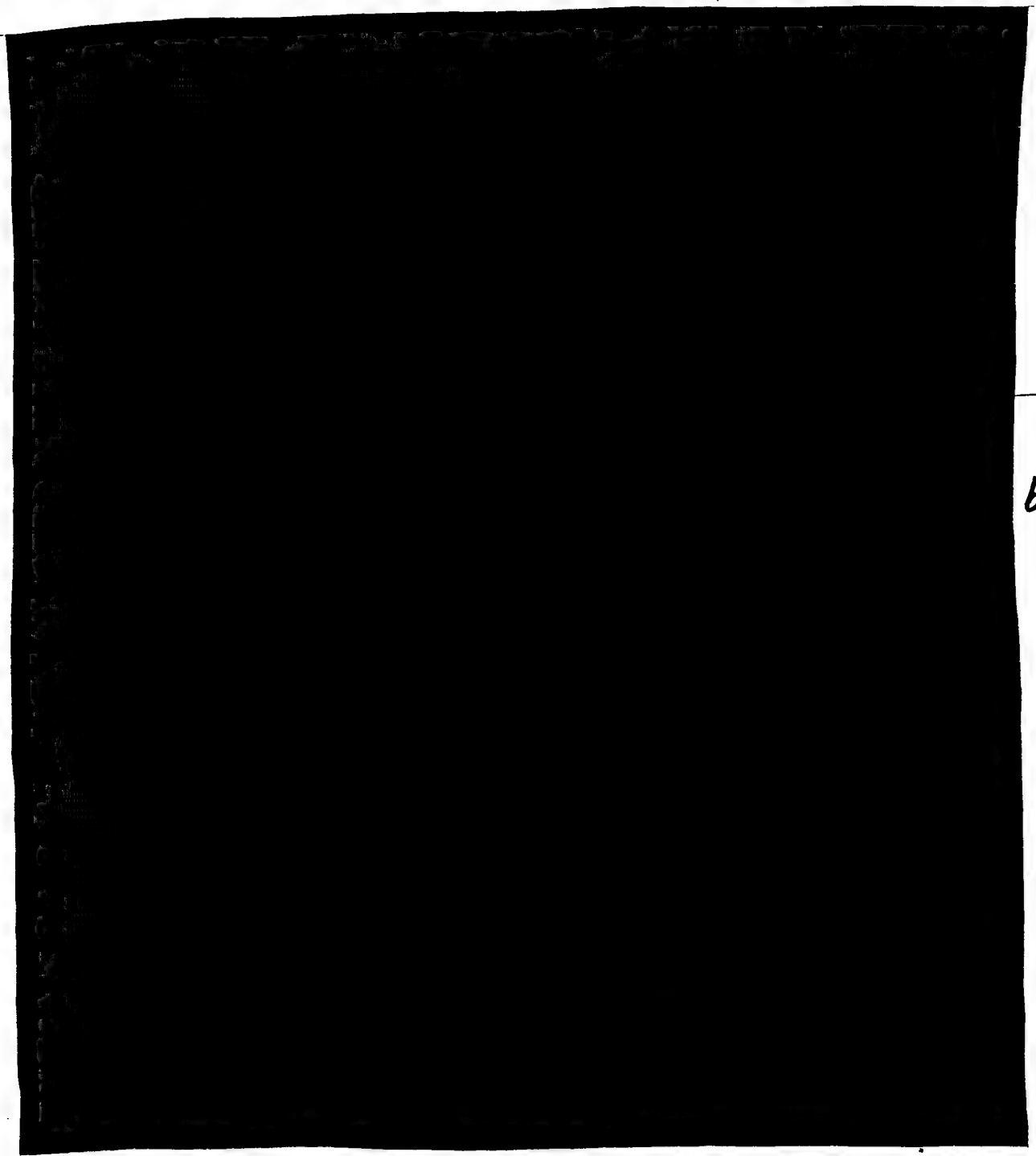
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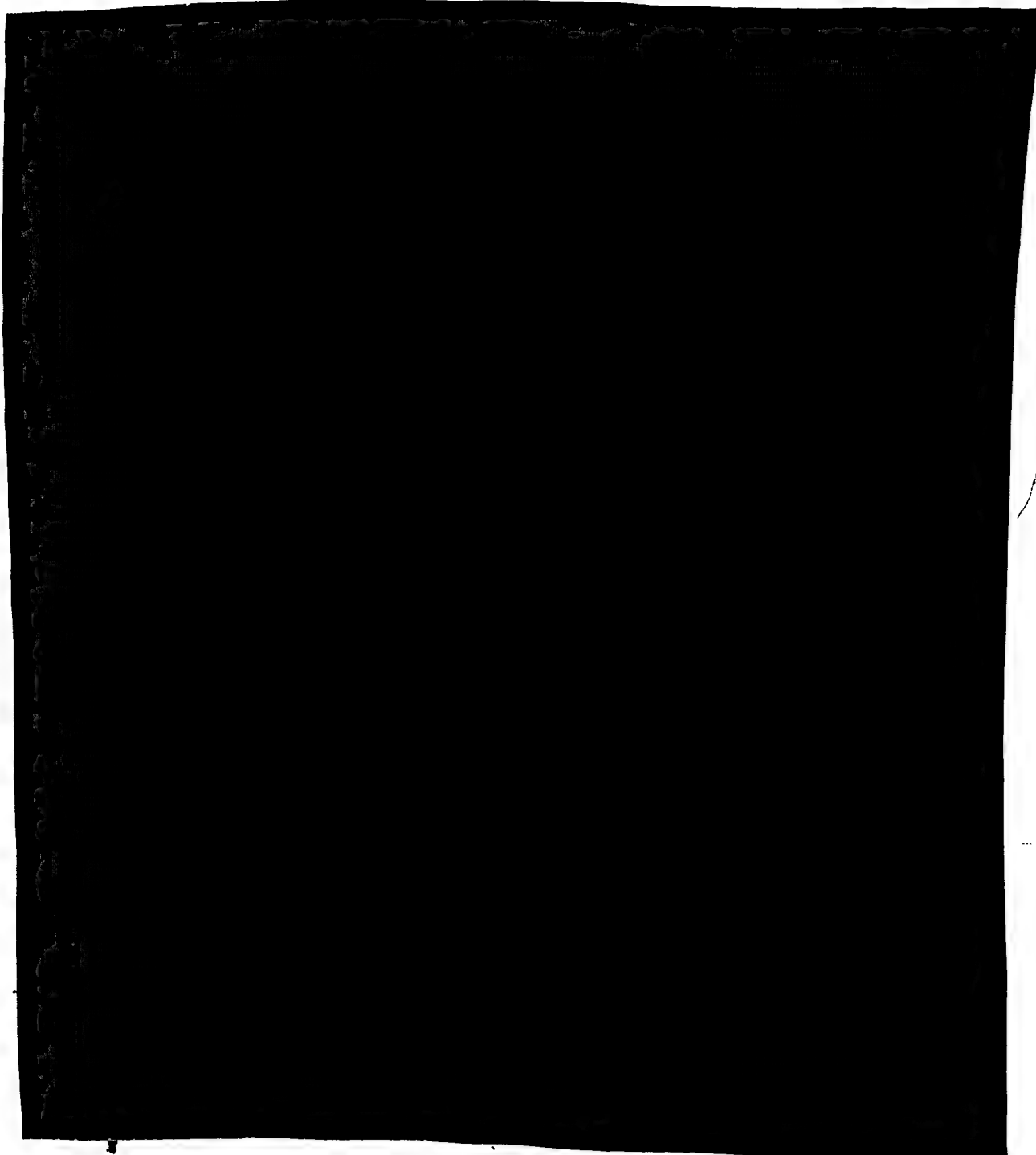
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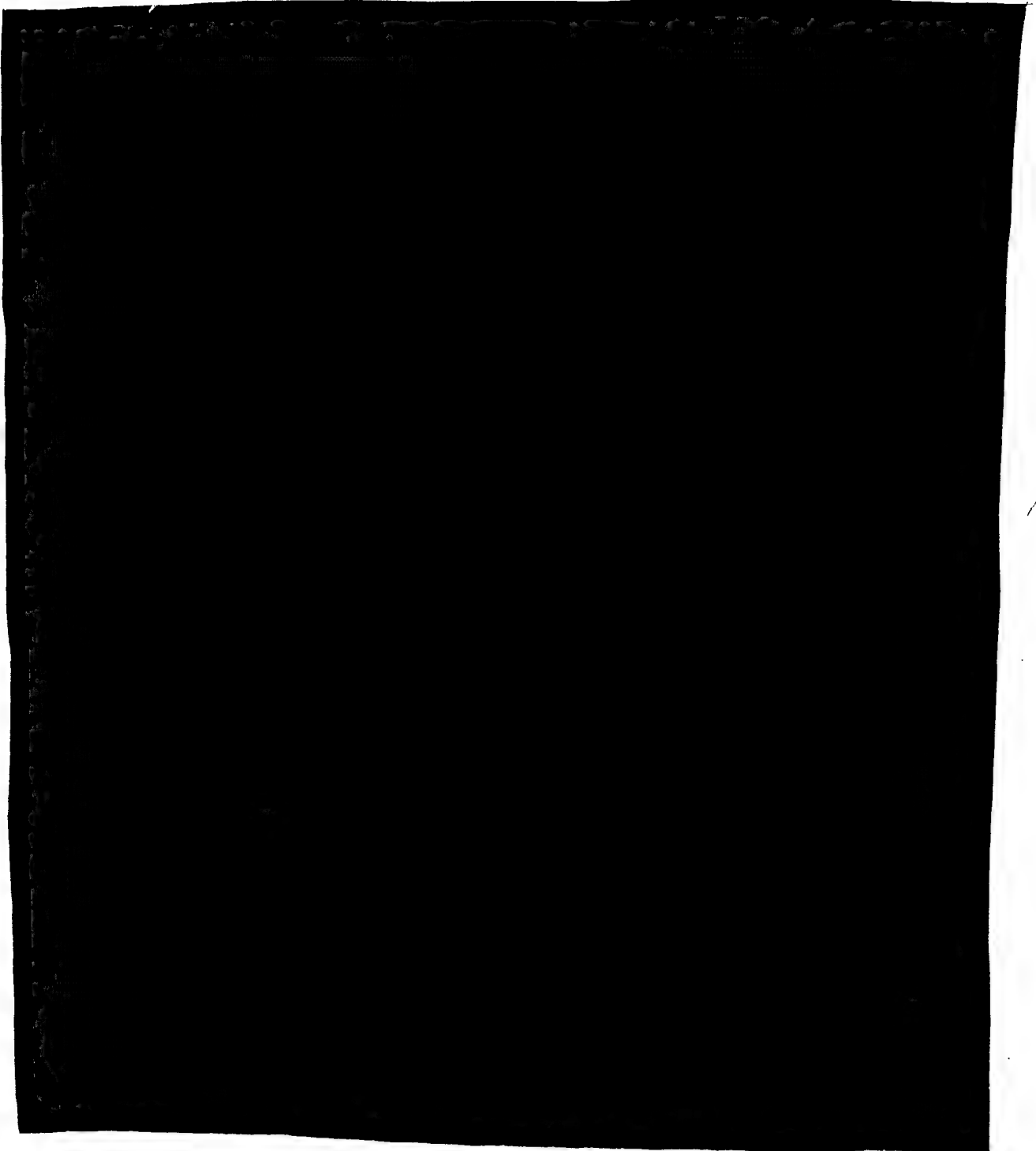
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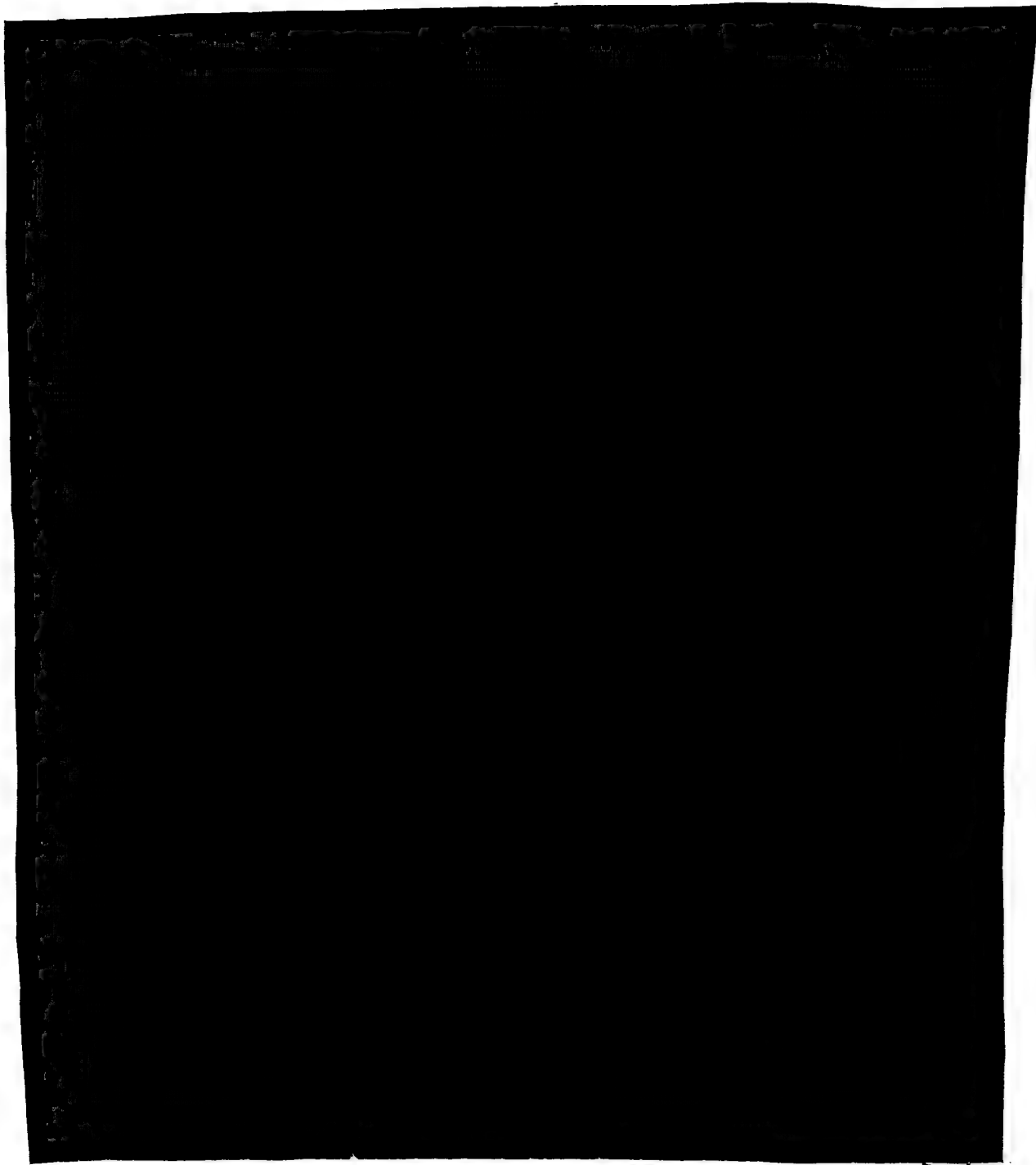
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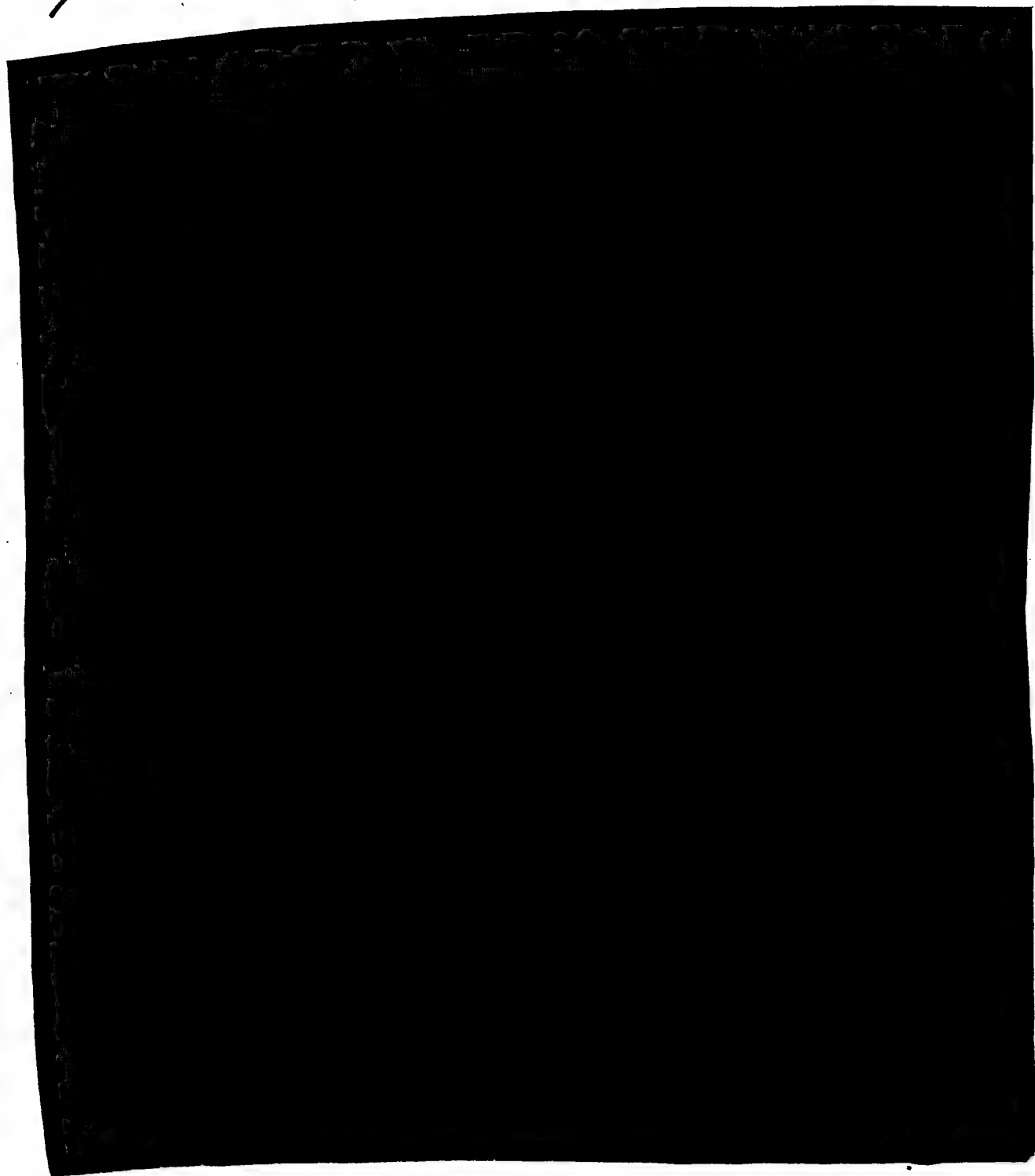
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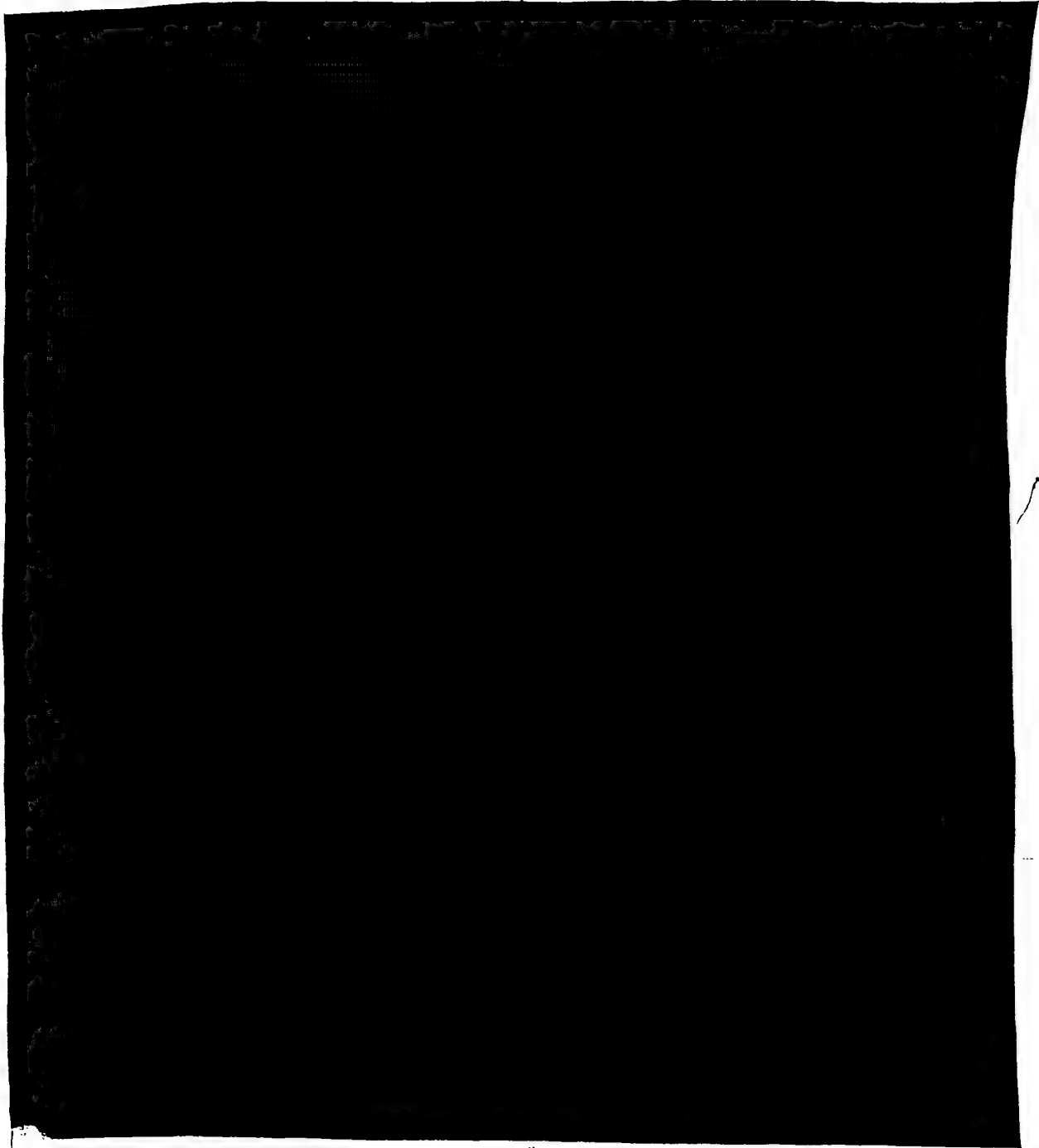


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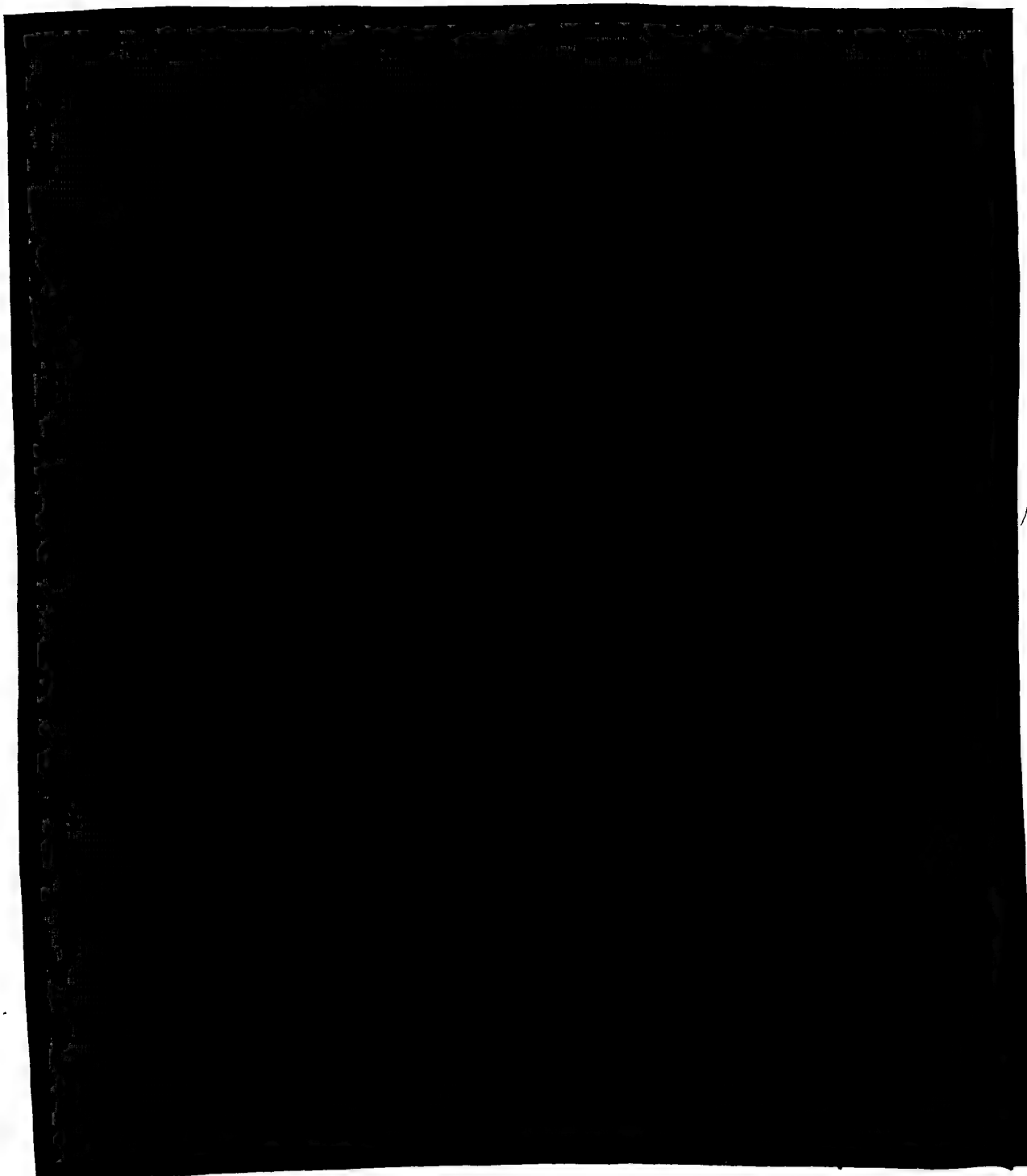
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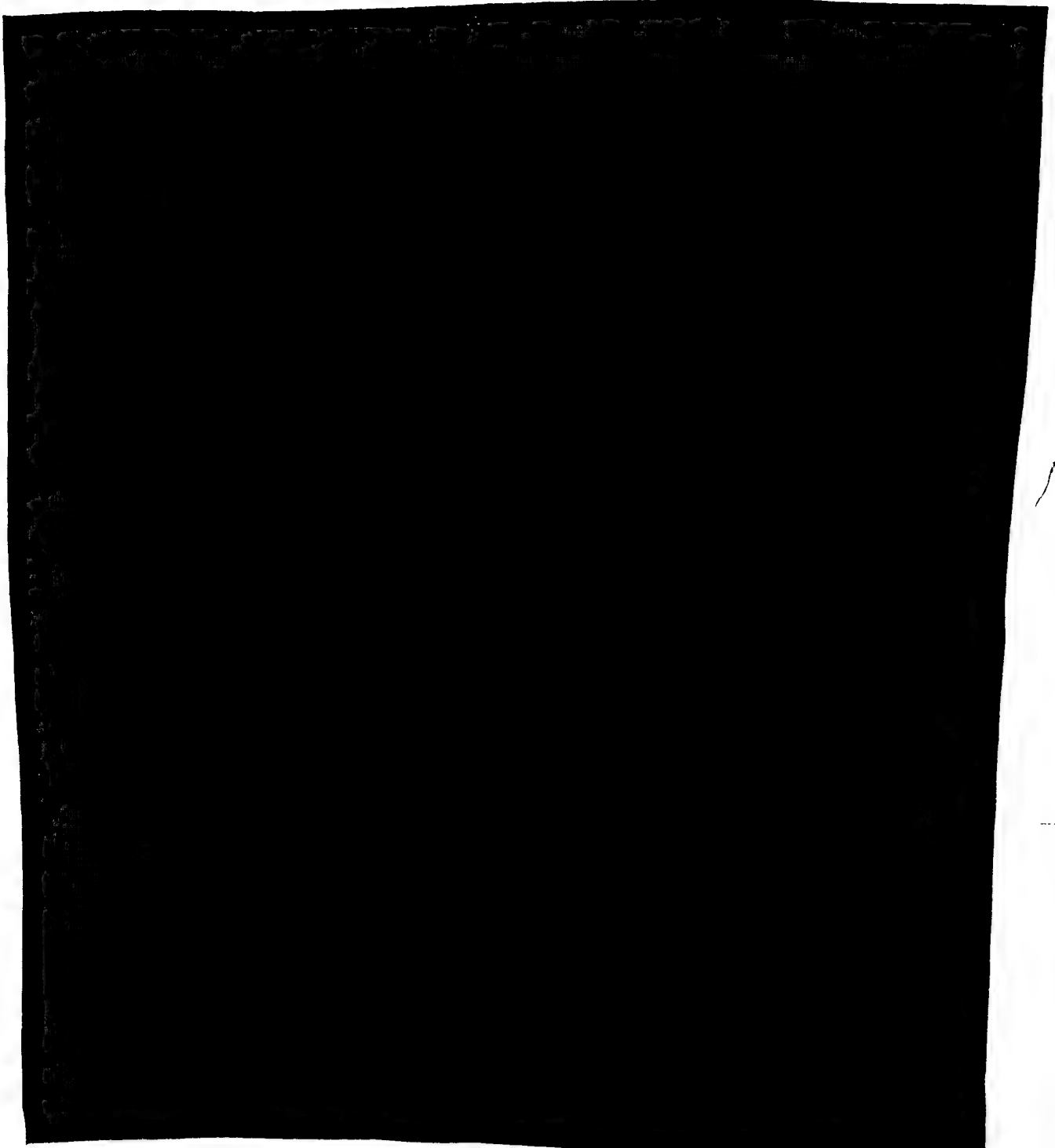
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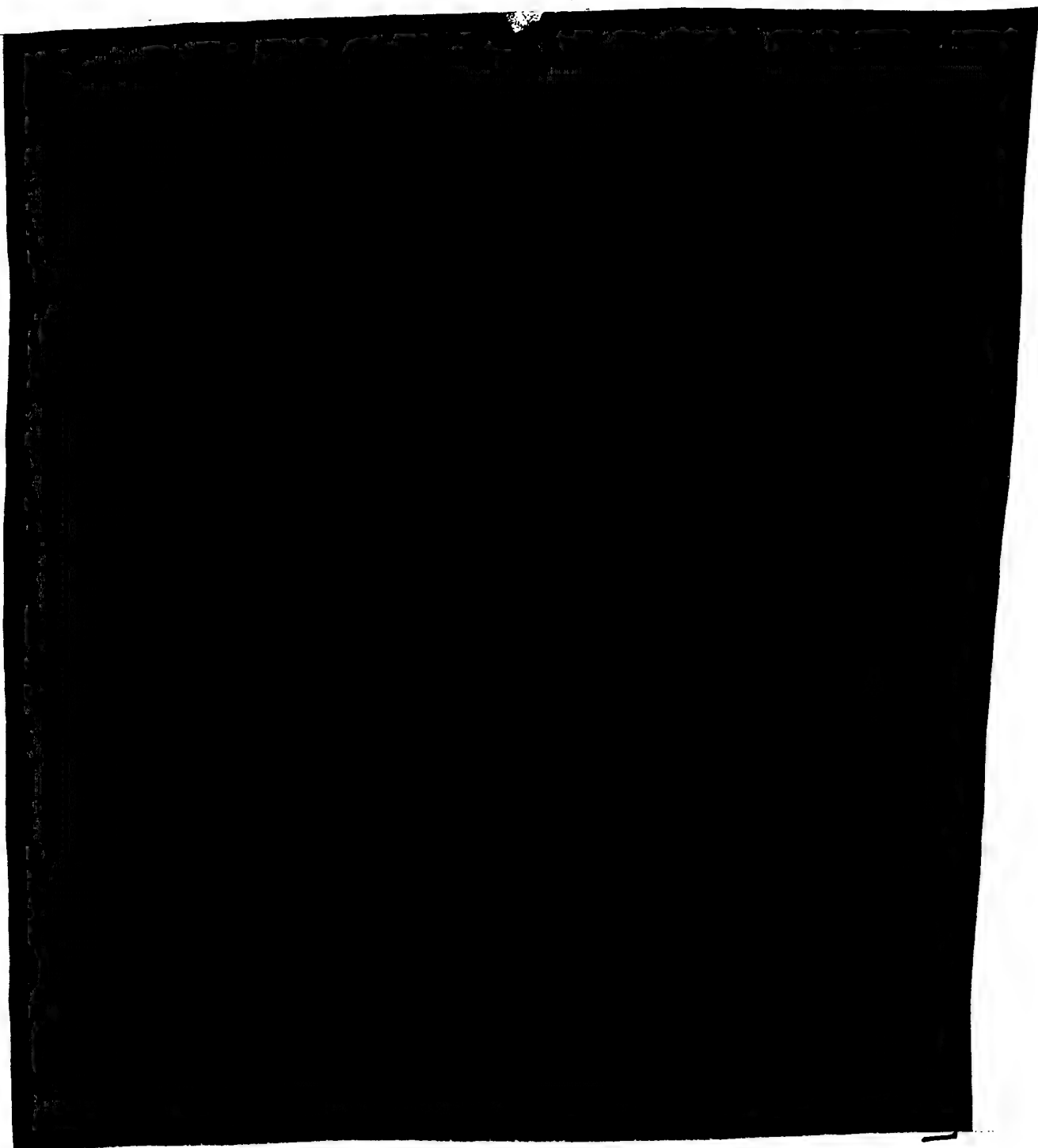
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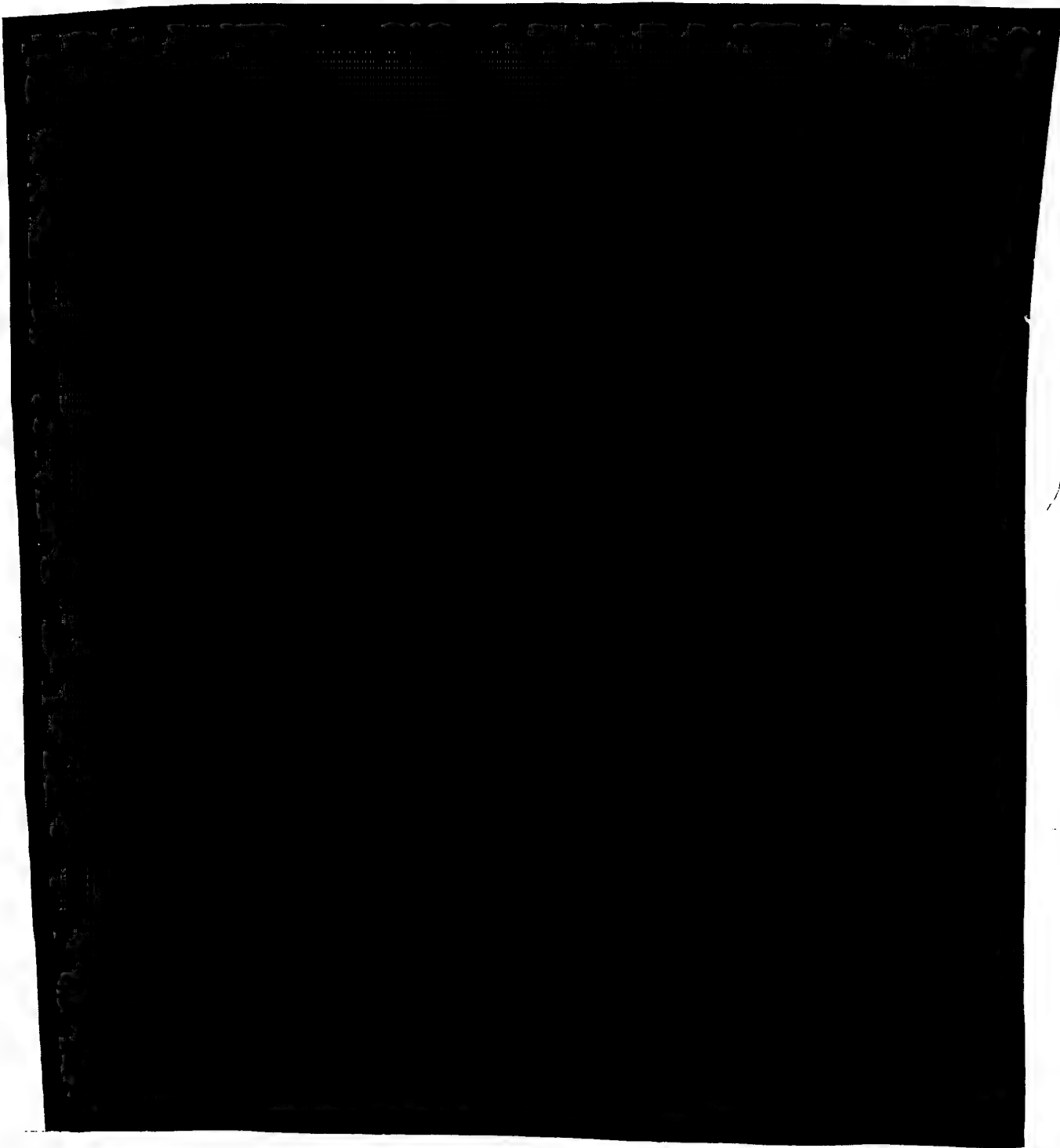
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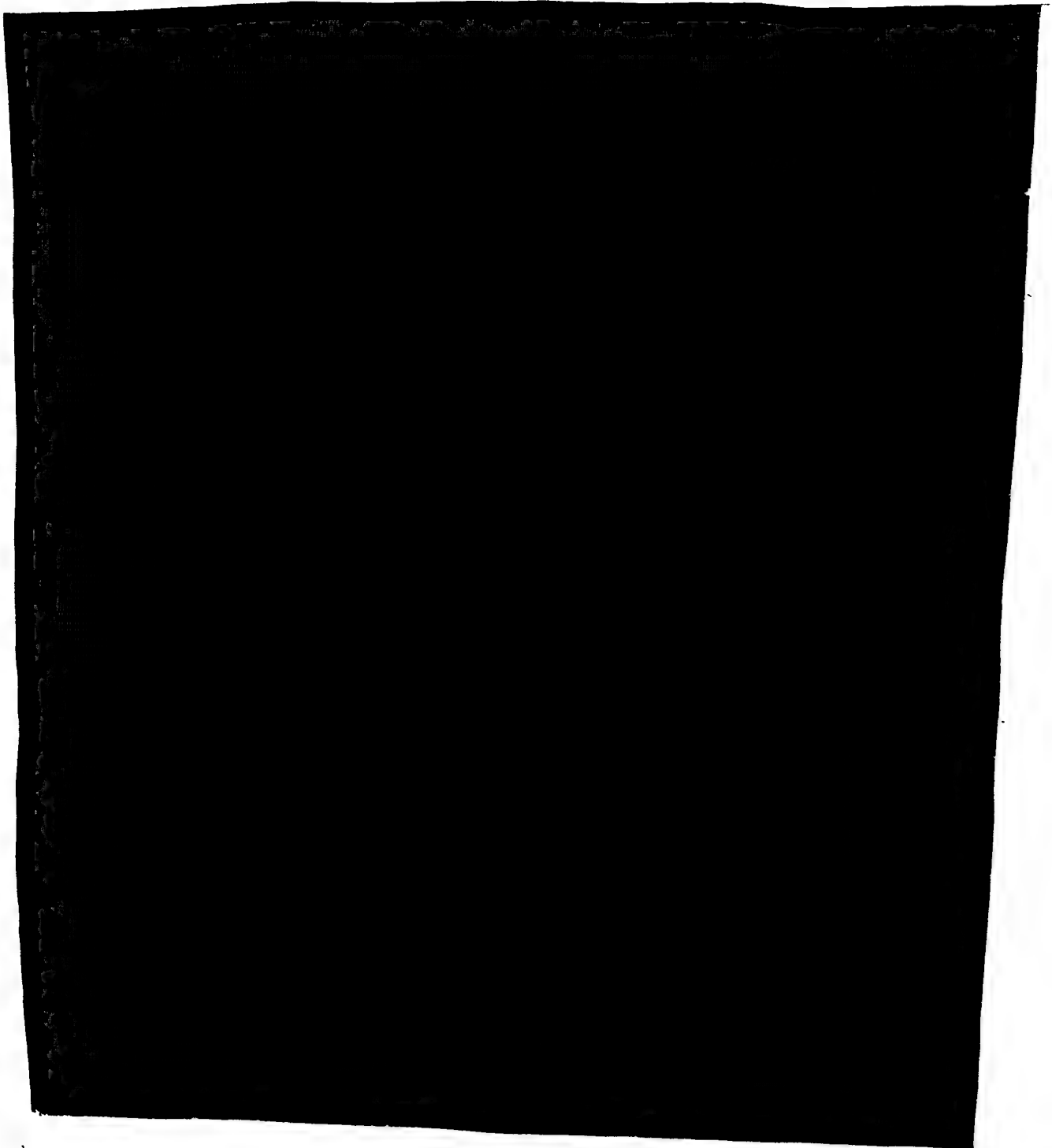


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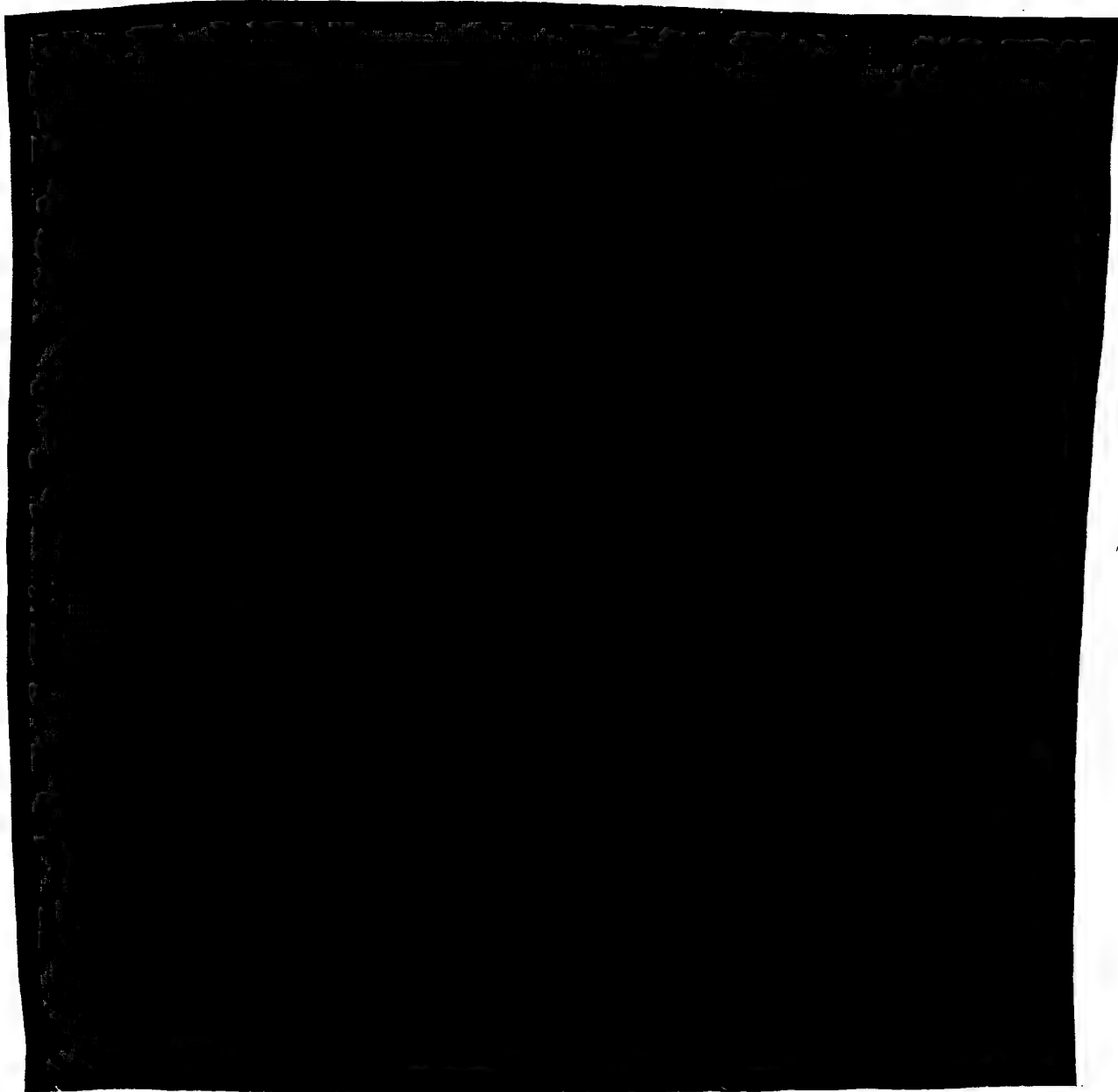
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Pakistan's Religious Diversity: Stumblingblock to a National Identity **b3**

In the years since independence Islamabad has reinforced Pakistan's religious diversity through legal, political, and economic discrimination rather than seeking to foster a national identity. Religious tensions between the Islamic sects and religious minorities have been heightened rather than muted as the government has striven to develop a fully Islamic state. Pakistan has struggled to strike a balance among its Muslim sects. Religious conflict among Muslims, however, is likely to continue as the debate over Islamization reemerges after national and provincial assembly elections in October. The non-Muslim communities face special problems over the lack of legal and political recognition in an Islamic culture that considers them second-class citizens. **b3**

Followers of Islam: Ties Do Not Bind

Islam has not provided the glue to hold together Pakistan's disparate Islamic communities despite the country's establishment as a homeland for Muslims. Violence between the Sunni and Shia communities is routine. The assassination of radical Sunni leader Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi on 22 February sparked rioting between Sunnis and Shias in Punjab for weeks. **b1, b3** Violence during Muharram—Sunni attacks on worshipping Shias—has risen markedly since 1987 when troops began to be deployed to troubled areas during religious festivals. **b3**

The Sunni community, approximately 70 percent of the population, is not content with numerical dominance but is trying to strip the minority Shias of legitimacy through the promotion of pro-Sunni legislation. The Shariah (Islamic law) bill, introduced by President Zia in 1985, was intended to unify the nation under the banner of Islam but has divided the Islamic communities. Based on Sunni religious doctrine, the Shariah bill represents the religious law revered by the majority of Pakistan's Muslims. The bill would extend that law to all of Pakistan. Although there are two clauses referring to the autonomy of personal laws of non-Muslims, final decisions on all matters would rest with the Shariah court. **b3**

Progress of the Shariah Bill

- 1985: *Shariah bill introduced to the Senate by President Zia ul-Haq.*
- 13 May 1990: *Senate passes Zia's Shariah bill with eight amendments. Bill must be passed by the National Assembly within 90 days.*
- 6 August 1990: *President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dissolves the National Assembly. Shariah bill passed by the Senate becomes void.*

The intentions of the Shariah bill are clear and drastic, in our judgment. Under strict interpretation of Islamic law, Shia citizens could be labeled as nonbelievers, opening the door for legally sanctioned religious persecution **b1, b3** and relegation to second-class citizenship. Islamic Law would grant overriding power to Sunni religious leaders, effectively nullifying the parliamentary process Pakistan has struggled to develop since independence. **b3** Under strict interpretation of Islamic law no females would be permitted to hold office, a right guaranteed by the Pakistani Constitution. **b3**

The implementation of the Shariah bill has been called into question by recent events. The dissolution of the National Assembly in early August—prompted in part by the escalating violence between Sunni and Shia groups—killed the Shariah bill for this session. The bill must be reintroduced and passed by the Senate before it can go to the new National Assembly, to be elected in October. **b1, b3**

Politicians worry that too much authority would be granted to religious leaders by the bill. For their part, religious leaders have called opposition to the bill un-Islamic, a dangerous label for politicians who prefer to appear supportive of it, and **b1, b3** have demanded that Benazir Bhutto be beheaded for her "anti-Islamic" comments and opposition to the bill. **b3**

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The Minorities: Beyond the Pale

Although the Shariah bill is primarily an attempt by the majority Sunhi Muslims to exert control and dominance over the Shias, it follows a pattern of marginalization of minorities in Pakistan. Islamabad has rarely legally declared minorities second-class citizens or denied constitutionally guaranteed rights, but the dominant Muslim community has used political and economic policies and intimidation to keep minorities at a disadvantage, in our view. b3

Political Protection. Islamabad guarantees political representation of minorities through the Constitution, but this only marginalizes them further. Representation in the legislature is restricted to a fixed number of seats, b3 We believe mainstream political parties do not find it necessary to court the minorities' votes. Neither is it in their interest to represent minority viewpoints in the legislature. Minorities who are represented do not have the numbers to act on their views. b3

The Ahmadis, who constitutionally are not considered Muslims, have refused to accept "separate but equal" political representation because, they argue, to do so would be tacit acceptance of their minority status. The Ahmadis—who follow the teachings of Ghulam Ahmad as well as those of Muhammad—profess themselves to be a legitimate division of Islam, but Islamabad has declared them unbelievers. In 1974 the National Assembly under the direction of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto passed legislation later incorporated into the Constitution that declared the Ahmadis non-Muslim. The government made it a criminal offense for Ahmadis to profess being Muslim, as well as for Ahmadis to proselytize. The ordinance prohibits all Ahmadis from participating in any Islamic religious practices. b3

As a minority group, Christians have constitutionally guaranteed rights but do not have parity with the Islamic population. Christians enjoy representation in the legislature, although individuals elected to office are "required to affirm that they will strive to preserve Islamic ideology." Islamic punishments are applied to non-Muslims, making it almost impossible for them to avail themselves of practices acceptable to Christians—divorce, for instance. Christians are already subject to the Christian Divorce Act of 1869, which permits divorce only if adultery is proven. This,

however, exposes the defendant to prosecution under Islamic law, according to which adultery is punishable by death by stoning. The problem is complicated by the Evidence Act of 1981, which mandates that a non-Muslim is not on par with Muslims in giving evidence in court. b3

Hindus increasingly are marginalized politically and socially in Pakistan. In 1984, Islamabad introduced separate electorates, resulting in increased harassment of Hindus by Muslims. With Hindu votes for Muslim political leaders no longer necessary, their protection from threats has ceased. As with the Christians, Hindus are subject to Islamic punishments ordered by the government. b3

Education and Employment. The Government of Pakistan has done little to enhance the education and employment opportunities available to its minority population. Discrimination against minority groups alienates them from Pakistani society. b3

Ostracized by Pakistan's Islamic society, the Ahmadi population, thrown on its own resources, has become better educated and more resented. Through a system of financial support—scholarships and long-term loans—the Ahmadis have raised their educational level and their prosperity. Their success incites the jealousy of other groups, fueling a cycle of animosity directed against the Ahmadis. b3 political parties exploit anti-Ahmadi sentiment. In March 1989 political and religious leaders whipped up opposition support by accusing the Bhutto government of appointing an Ahmadi as chief secretary of Sindh. b3

As non-Muslims, Christians are prevented by law from holding influential positions. They have been banned from major political offices. b3 In our view, there are barriers to Christians rising to a high level in the public service and public corporations. With few exceptions (most of those being wealthy Muslim converts), Christians fail to rise beyond the lowest levels of Pakistani society and are consistently found in low-level jobs in municipal services or as bonded laborers. b3

Education, historically the way out for Christians, is no longer open to them. In 1972, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto nationalized virtually all educational institutions in

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Pakistan, including those owned and operated by Christians. Private sponsorship and financial support by the churches of deserving but impoverished Christian students are no longer possible under the present government eliminating any possibility for social advancement. [REDACTED] b3

Discrimination against Hindus in employment is widespread. Most of the Hindu population is relegated to jobs assumed by the lower castes of the religion, [REDACTED] Consequently, they are primarily employed as sanitary workers or bonded laborers. Hindus are not admitted into the Pakistani Army, although there is no legal bar to their acceptance by the military, while within the legal arena no Hindu has risen above the level of district judge, [REDACTED] b3 Little government assistance is provided to Hindus, virtually eliminating the possibility of improving their living conditions and educational levels. [REDACTED] b3

Intimidation. Violence and other forms of intimidation influence and subdue the religious minorities more effectively than any other form of suppression devised by Islamabad, in our view:

- Anti-Ahmadi violence has been cited in the past four US human rights reports on Pakistan, although the charges of government neglect of the situation have been repeatedly denied by Islamabad. [REDACTED] b3 events in which Ahmadi are killed and their homes and property destroyed by orthodox

Muslims, and the police response has been to expel the Ahmadi community.

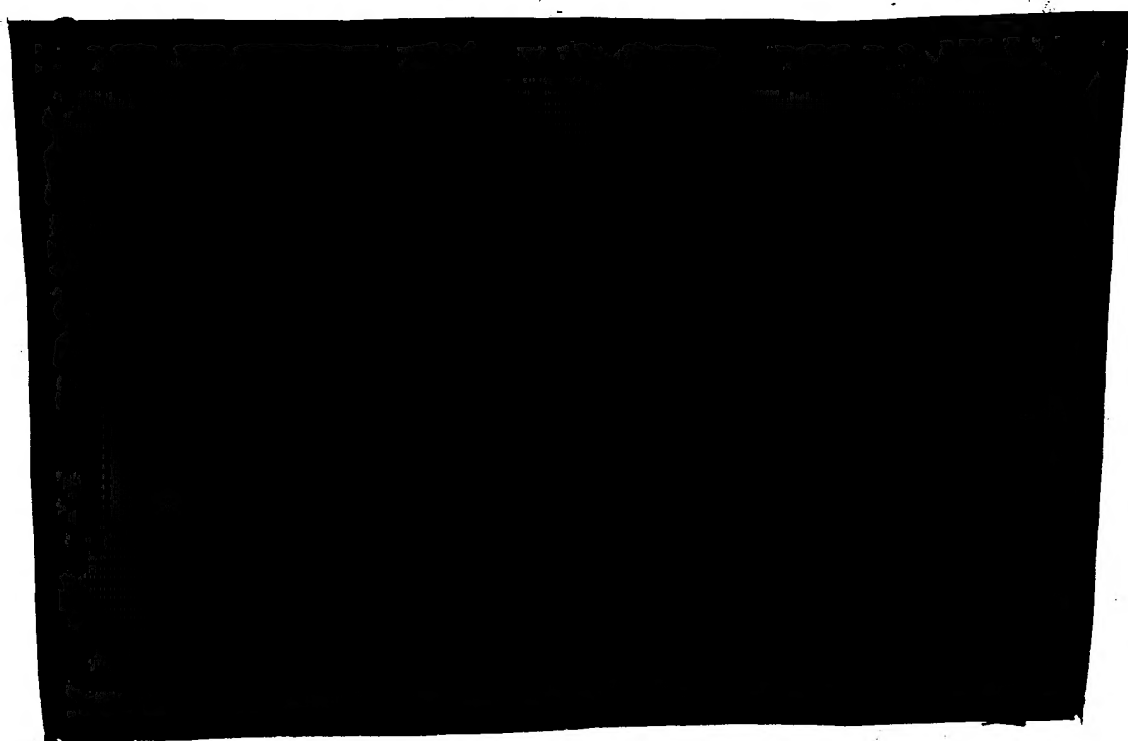
- Complaints of discriminatory practices by officials toward Christians [REDACTED] b3 Christians face opposition in attempts to build on new church sites. In Karachi and Islamabad authorities automatically allot free land for mosques, while Christians must purchase church sites at market rates.
- Hindus face the inevitable accusation that they are "Indian spies." This has led to restrictions on their travel to India and, during wars, their relocation to detention camps. Violence against the community is commonplace. In the shootings in Hyderabad in May 1990, most of the 27 people killed were Hindus. [REDACTED] b3

Outlook

The development of a national identity for Pakistan has become secondary in importance to the creation of an Islamic state dominated by Sunni religious doctrine, in our view. Religious tensions, are worsened by Islamabad's policies of Islamization of the government and its reinforcement of them. Given the religious fervor incited by the Shariah bill and the recent upheaval in Pakistan's political affairs, the probability of reconciliation among Pakistan's religious groups is slim. [REDACTED] b3

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21 September 1990

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